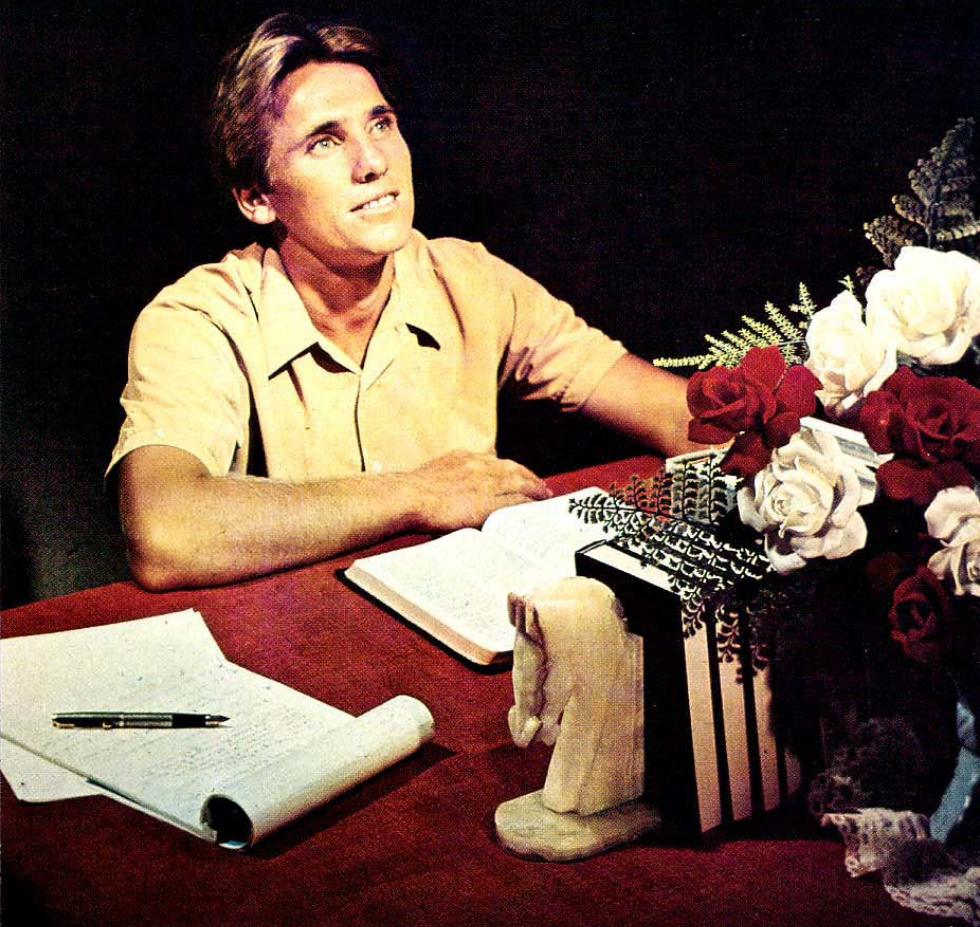


JUSTIFIED!

-by Faith!



JUSTIFIED! **-by Faith!**

by F. T. WRIGHT

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57520 Dickendorf
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Internet: www.srac.de

E-Mail: sabbath@sabbath-rest-advent.org

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COVER PICTURE

In the lives of David, Paul, Martin Luther, John Wesley, and countless others, there came that blessed moment when the truth of justification by faith and the righteousness of Christ opened to their grateful minds. Forever afterwards, they recognized that point of time as the great divide between life without Christ and true Christian experience; between a period when they lived under the curse of condemnation and the era when they dwelt in the light of God's presence; between that time when they thought they served God and when living, acceptable service began. It was a blessedness for which they never ceased to be thankful.

In like manner, the young man pictured on the cover has discovered this blessedness, the joy of which is expressed on his grateful countenance as he lifts his glowing face heavenward.

FOREWORD

Justification is the divine provision for the sin problem. It is obtained by the correct exercise of faith, and thus becomes a living experience within the recipient. It is the most desirable treasure any soul can covet, for it brings the gift of eternal life.

Yet, as Christ Himself has sadly confirmed, few will find it and enter immortal through the "strait" gate. Millions will try to gain admittance, but in many cases will fail because they have been taught erroneous views on justification.

The Master Teacher warned that it is the knowledge of the truth which makes one free, while error will always destroy. To receive the blessedness of justification by faith in verity, the needy soul must understand the nature and extent of the condemnation resting on him, and the structure of the solution which God has provided to remove that awesome, destructive weight. He must also understand exactly what God will do, and what he must do.

Then, taking great care not to attempt to do God's part, the sinner faithfully follows the procedures outlined in the Scriptures. As surely as he does this in living faith, the blessing will follow. He will be justified and receive the righteousness of Christ.

This publication is written to make these things clear and it is our prayer that every reader will come to know by experience "the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." Romans 4:6.

Chapter One

THE BLESSEDNESS OF FORGIVENESS

Everyone begins life the same, as condemned and therefore unjustified sinners. Passing through life entirely ignorant of this, as most people do, does not save anyone from the awful consequences of inherited condemnation. Escape is possible only when the sinner, realizing his desperate situation, casts himself on the mercy of an infinitely compassionate God and lays hold of the saving power in justification by faith.

The Holy Spirit never ceases in His efforts to bring men a clear understanding of their lost condition and impending fate. Unfortunately, with the majority His work is a failure, but there are the few who do not reject God's awful revelations of their evil condition and who, by accepting the divinely formulated solutions, pass from condemnation to justification.

Firstly, the transgressor must be exposed to a convicting realization of his actual spiritual condition. This is only the *initial* step in the procedure, for he must also be taught the nature of the condemnation which is crushing him, the power and scope of justification, God's role in applying the remedy, and how he must do for himself what the Saviour cannot do for him. There must be no danger of his confusing God's work and his own. He has to understand the simple but precise procedures which must be followed in order to effect deliverance from condemnation. All this must be taught to and understood by the suppliant.

When the Holy Spirit's convicting ministry has exchanged the soul's complacency for the horror of great darkness and sense of eternal despair which attend one who sees his real condition, the way has been prepared for the sinner's justification. As the despairing soul is filled with this sacred gift, he is transported into an experience too wonderful and blessed for human language to describe. As the new child of God seeks to testify to this marvellous gift, he finds himself understood only by those who have already received the same blessing.

David was such an one. He *knew* what it was to be down in the pit of condemnation, unjustified, sentenced to eternal death and everlasting separation from God and heaven. He experienced this in a vivid and unforgettable way.

He also knew what it meant to have that darkness and despair exchanged for the absolute *blessedness* of sins forgiven, the *blessedness* of God's justification. Listen to his testimony:

"I waited patiently for the Lord;

and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

"He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.

"And He hath put a new song in my mouth,

even praise unto our God:

many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." *Psalms* 40:1-3.

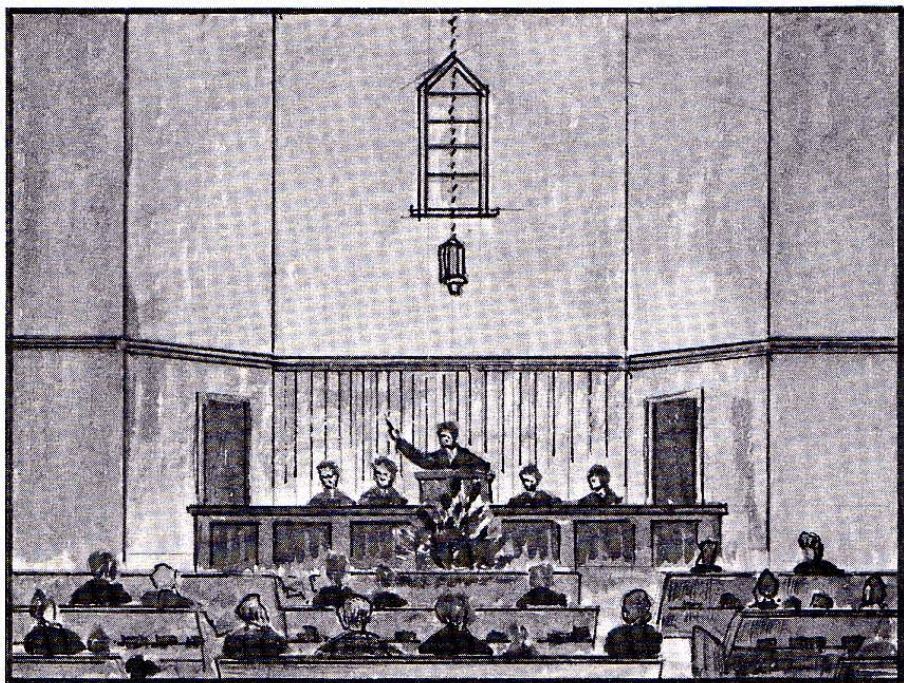
David had been elevated from the depths and blackness of the pit to solid ground and established goings by the living power of God's forgiveness and justification. What joy and blessedness was his in consequence.

Paul understood David's experience, for he had passed over exactly the same ground. So when he came to write on this glorious truth of justification by faith, he directed the reader to David's witness with these words, "Even as David also describeth the *blessedness* of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

"Saying, *Blessed are* they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." *Romans* 4:6, 7, the citation from David being *Psalms* 32:1, 2.

There are multitudes of people who believe that the Lord has forgiven their sins, but how many can really testify to the *blessedness* of the man whose sins are forgiven? This blessedness is of God and from God. Those who have it are enjoying great happiness, have sweet *peace*, and are conscious of God's approval. This is the incomparable experience without which no man can see God. This is the joy of all joys, the happiness of all happiness. Those who truly have justification by faith will find springing spontaneously from their thankful hearts the living words of the Psalmist, "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in Thy presence is *fulness of joy*; at Thy right hand there are *pleasures for evermore*." *Psalms* 16:11. This is the life eternal. This is to know "the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom" He has "sent". *John* 17:3.

This subject is so important and the experience so desirable, that at least two developments should be manifest as the end draws near. Firstly, among God's true children it will be the main topic of interest and subject of preaching as it is written: "One interest will prevail, one subject will swallow up every other,—Christ our righteousness." *The Review and Herald Extra*, December 23, 1890.



That which is preached as *justification by faith*, is not always what it is purported to be.

Secondly, in those churches which Satan has brought under his deceptive power, and where he will make it appear that God is mightily at work, a close and convincing counterfeit of justification by faith will be the main topic of interest. With great assurance and considerable power, the ministry will constantly present the spurious topic, and multitudes will rejoice because they think they are listening to saving truth.

This confronts every sincere contender for eternal life with the problem of identifying the true from the false. Those in the present generation who are spiritually inclined, cannot but be aware of this difficulty as they hear conflicting voices on every hand proclaiming various versions of justification by faith. Obviously, in view of the fact that there is only one way of salvation, not all these messages which go by the same name can be heaven-sent light. Nothing is more desirable than that the truth on Christ's righteousness be the dominant theme, but what is preached must be the truth, not a clever counterfeit of it.

No one should be surprised at this confusion, for there are ample warnings in Scripture predicting it. Christ warned: "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." *Matthew 24:24*.

Counterfeit Christs and prophets will come *apparently* teaching just what the Saviour and the apostles taught—justification by faith. So closely will the spurious resemble the true that the very elect will be endangered. Therefore, all need to be certain that, on this subject, they have the truth as it is in Jesus, and that they understand precisely how to enter into and maintain the experience.

Seeming Contradictions

In the Scriptures there are two apparently contradictory sets of statements describing justification by faith. One set describes it as a crediting of Christ's righteousness to the believer so that he stands before God as if he had never sinned. The other informs us that justification is making a man to be righteous within himself.

At first, it seems impossible to reconcile these two different specifications and some seek to avoid the apparent discrepancies by selecting one set or the other and building their theology upon the verses they have chosen.

God's true children never adopt this course of action. Their absolute faith in the divine authorship of the Scriptures assures them that there are no real contradictions in God's Word, any which seem to be there being the result of human lack of understanding, and that, under the Spirit's leading, every text will be found to harmonize with every other. There is no need to ignore one set of statements in favour of another. This is a practice guaranteed to deprive one of that correct understanding of truth which will bring the gift of eternal life.

Therefore, God's true children gather all the statements on the subject and then in prayerful submission to the divine Teacher, search until the answers are revealed to them. This is the only safe course, for in no other way can the truth be found and salvation assured.

Firstly, a number of statements will be quoted which verify that justification is a reckoning or an accounting of righteousness.

"What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?

"For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.

"For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was *counted* unto him for righteousness.

"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." Romans 4:1-5.

In this passage, Paul has emphasized that righteousness is counted, accounted, or reckoned to the sinner. Because the needy soul is unable to achieve justification by his own works or efforts, it has to be provided for him by someone who can. Jesus Christ is the Benefactor.



Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, 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 4:6-8.

This is clearly explained in the following statement. "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. He can say with rejoicing, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life' (Titus 3:5-7)." *Selected Messages* 1:367. Originally from *The Review and Herald*, November 4, 1890.

The same thought is expressed again in these words: "It was possible for Adam, before the fall, to form a righteous character by obedience to God's law. But he failed to do this, and because of his sin our natures are fallen and we cannot make ourselves righteous. Since we are sinful, unholy, we cannot perfectly obey the holy law. 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." *Steps to Christ*, 62.

Both these statements reiterate and amplify Paul's message in Romans 4:1-5. They confirm that the sinner who stands before God bearing the deadly condemnation earned by a life of iniquity, can do

nothing of himself to remove the burden. Salvation cannot come by human works. Man's only hope is for God to account righteousness to him. As the transgressor fulfils his part by repentance and acceptable confession, Christ steps in and transfers the credit of His own spotless righteousness to the sinner's account. At the same time, He takes the iniquity of the evildoer upon His righteous self. Once this transaction is completed, the justified one stands before God so fully *accounted* righteous, that *it is as though he had never sinned*.

There is a decided difference between saying that a man is righteous, and saying he is as *though* or as *if* he were righteous. The first statement declares that the person has become righteous within himself. The second denies this for it avers that he is only as *if* he were righteous. The simple, inescapable message of these statements is that a person is justified *without being made righteous*.

This is a thrilling and beautiful truth which, when once understood, received, and experienced, brings great rejoicing and wonderful peace. So it should, for it is an incredible offer made by a righteous God to totally undeserving transgressors. Foolish indeed are those who in any way fail to appropriate the marvellous gift. Let all cast aside any doubts about God's forgiving power and enjoy the blessedness of knowing that once they have received God's justification, they stand before Him as *if they had never sinned*. What more could be asked for?

Wonderful as this is, it is not the whole story. The Lord offers much more. Unfortunately, many religionists never get past this phase for they are quite content to make it the entire message on justification. But the texts and statements quoted above are not the only ones to be found in the inspired Word. There are others which by clearly stating that God justifies the sinner by actually making him righteous, present what seems to be a contradictory picture.

Although this initially appears confusing and misleading, these other verses and statements must also be received just as they read. The divine Author of the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit, put them there to reveal to us the whole truth on the subject. No study of justification by faith would be complete without considering these other statements. Therefore, we shall read them as well.

Paul, the great exponent of this theme, wrote, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have *peace* with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." *Romans* 5:1.

To be justified by faith, then, is to *have* peace with God. But it is impossible to have peace with God and simultaneously be at enmity with Him. Therefore, whatever enmity was present before justification, is removed to give the justified peace with God.

What is this enmity?

Is it a hostile mental attitude, the long-standing guilt of sins unconfessed and unforgiven, or is it the setting of a perverse will against the heavenly influences?

It is none of these, although every one of them will be present where the enmity is found. The enmity is the carnal mind as it is written: "Because the *carnal mind* is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Romans 8:7.

Note that the verse does *not* say the carnal mind is *at* enmity, but that it is the enmity. This distinction is most important in understanding the Scripture.

In 1893, A. T. Jones was preaching to the assembled delegates at the General Conference session in Minneapolis, Minnesota, when he came to the discussion of this verse. Here is how the discourse went:

"Now Romans 8:6, 7: 'For to be carnally minded is death.' What is the condition of that man who has only the natural mind? [Congregation: 'Dead.'] 'But to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind [the natural mind] is' AT enmity with God. [Congregation: 'No; is enmity against God.'] No; it is not *at* enmity with God; but *it* itself, is enmity. It 'is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God,' until the man is converted? [Congregation: 'Neither indeed can be.'] Can't be? Cannot God make that mind subject to His law? [Congregation: 'No.'] Now, can't the Lord make that mind that is in you and me—the natural mind—can't He make that subject to His law? [Congregation: 'No.'] What is that mind? It is enmity against God. Cannot the Lord make that which is enmity against Him,—can't He make it love *for* Him? [Congregation: 'No.']

"There is the point: if it were *at* enmity, then it might be reconciled, because the thing that would make it *at* enmity would be the source of the trouble. And therefore, take away the source of the trouble, then the thing that is at enmity would be reconciled. *We are at* enmity; but when He takes the enmity away, *we are reconciled* to God. In this matter of the carnal mind though, there is nothing between; *it is the thing itself*. That is the root.

"Then it cannot be subject to the law of God. The only thing that can be done with it, is to destroy it, uproot it, *banish* it, *annihilate* it. Whose mind is it? [Congregation: 'Satan's.'] It is the mind of self, and that is of Satan. Well then, what can a man do in the way of righteousness? What can be done in him, even, in the way of righteousness, until that other mind is there? [Congregation: 'Nothing.']" A. T. Jones, 1893 *General Conference Bulletin*, 260. Emphasis original.

Thus, according to the Scriptures, the carnal mind is the enmity. As darkness is the antithesis of light and as it is impossible for one to dwell in the presence of the other, so the carnal mind is enmity against God and cannot abide with Him.

Therefore, every person with the carnal mind has, at the same time, what that carnal mind is—enmity against God. It is impossible to have this enmity and also have peace with God. So when it can be said of a person that he has come into harmony with God, this shows that a transforming work has been done in him involving the eradication of the old carnal mind and its replacement with Christ's precious life. Then he is justified.

These verses, *Romans* 8:7 and 5:1, give no indication that justification by faith is a work of accounting. Instead, they speak in terms of a cleansing and recreating work which transforms the believer from a sinner to a saint. Only Christ can accomplish this work, because He alone has the power to remove the enmity and to install His life in its place. Justification, as set out in this Scripture, is the making of a man to be righteous.

Most modern religions go so far as to deny that any real work of transformation is done within the believer. They dwell heavily on the thought of their being in Christ, but they have nothing to say about Christ being in them. Others come a step nearer to the truth by recognizing that the gospel does change men's lives, but they do not see that this transformation is accomplished through justification. To them, it is only a judicial act by which the soul is set free from condemnation, after which sanctification gradually changes a person into Christ's likeness. The real truth is that sanctification continues the work established by justification.

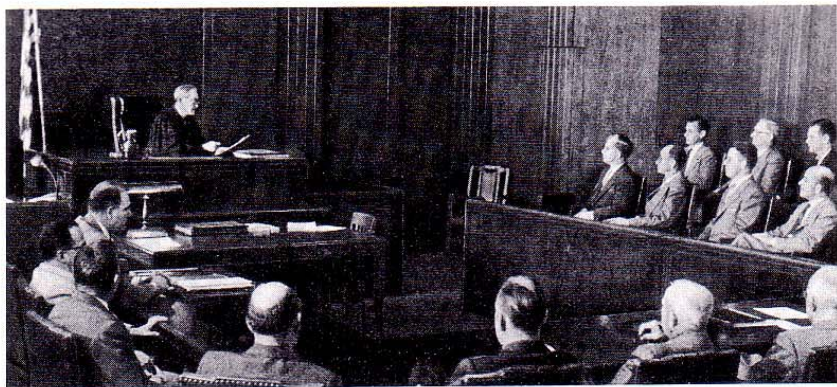
As the idea that justification is more than merely reckoning a man to be righteous is so foreign to the average mind, it is necessary to quote further Scriptural evidence.

"For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us." *Ephesians* 2:14.

If Paul had written that Christ *makes* peace between man and God, he would have spoken the truth, but not with the power and effectiveness of the wonderful words, "*He is our peace*". Perfect harmony between two beings can only be achieved when their natures are compatible, whether they be human or divine. Thus, the implantation of Christ's life within the believer establishes peace with God just as surely as the presence of the carnal mind ensures enmity with Him.

True peace with God can never be achieved by simply reckoning or accounting a man righteous. Only by changing his nature so that it is in harmony with God can such a relationship be established. This wonderful transformation can be effected only by the eradication of the life which has sprung from Satan's seed, and its replacement with Christ's seed. * That life in the believer is peace with God, for Christ is our peace. To

*For a detailed explanation of this truth, see *The Living and the Dead*, available from Destiny Press.



When an earthly judge in an earthly courtroom declares a man to be justified, there is provided, not a complete, but a partial illustration of heaven's justification. Earthly courts justify on the basis of what a man has *done*. God justifies on the basis of what a man has *done* and what a man is. The principle similarity between the two is that both justify as far as they can see. As he is not able to read the heart, the earthly judge cannot pass judgment on what the man is. This, heaven can and does do.

have Him is peace, while to be without Him is enmity against God. Only when His life has been implanted within is the believer justified.

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." *2 Corinthians 5:17*. This Scripture testifies to the same truth. No man is in Christ unless he is justified, which, according to this verse, means that the old, evil, spiritual nature has passed away and he has become a new creation. This work of re-creation is not accomplished by reckoning a man to be righteous but by *making* him righteous.

One of the strongest and clearest evidences teaching these truths is found in *Romans 8:1, 2*.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

To say that "There is therefore now *no condemnation*", is precisely the same as saying, "There is therefore now *justification*".

The two words, "therefore" and "now", indicate that the condition of no condemnation (or justification) has been gained because certain things have happened. Paul does not say it is because the sinner has been forgiven for his past deeds, although this is part of it, but because he has been set free from the controlling power of the law of sin and death. He plainly says that there is no longer any condemnation, "For [because] the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." *Romans 8:2*.

What is this law of sin and death?

Throughout *Romans* 7, Paul has shown that it is a power which controls a sinner against his will and forces him to commit sins he knows he should not be committing. This indwelling power is not the guilt of sin, for guilt, rather than compelling a man to continue the same evil practices, fills him with the desire to terminate them.

Delivering a transgressor from the guilt of sin is not the work which sets him free from the law of sin and death, even though the two events come together. Salvation from guilt is achieved by one work; deliverance from the law of sin and death requires another. Only when both have been done is the person justified.

At this point some may feel that the study has become confusing. While some statements positively declare that justification is reckoning a man to be righteous, others show that a man is not justified until he has been made righteous. So far, no effort has been made to reconcile this apparent contradiction, for the purpose has been to show that these seemingly contradictory statements do exist. Once this has been achieved, we can discover how they harmonize. This will be much simpler than one would expect.

Firstly though, more statements will be examined confirming that those who are made righteous are thereby justified.

" 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' *John* 3:3. He may conjecture and imagine, but without the eye of faith he cannot see the treasure. Christ gave His life to secure for us this inestimable treasure; but *without regeneration* through faith in His blood, *there is no remission* of sins, no *treasure* for any perishing soul." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 112, 113.

"Without regeneration . . . there is no remission of sins."

What is regeneration and what is remission of sins?

These two questions must be correctly answered if the statement just quoted is to be understood. To generate is to give life as the Lord did for man back in Eden. "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens." *Genesis* 2:4.

That work of generation gave man his existence. Blessed with the gift of life, it was intended that he live forever. Unfortunately, he failed to value the gift as he should have, and consequently lost it.

He needed forgiveness for what he had done, but more than that he needed a regeneration of life to replace what he had lost. In the plan of salvation, God made every provision to supply this need. Christ announced this when He said: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." *John* 10:10.

The life which Christ came to give was not a " . . . modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature." *The Desire of*

Ages, 172. It is Christ's own perfect, righteous, and holy life which, once imparted to the believer in the regeneration, makes him righteous in himself. There is no difference between the work of generation and that of regeneration. The latter is only the repetition of the former made necessary because the life received in the first generation has been lost. Unlike the regeneration of the body which occurs at the second advent, the regeneration of spiritual life is the present experience of every born again Christian.

This is not a make-believe gift. Christ actually imparts His life to the believer who literally becomes a new creation. If this were not so, the miracle could not be truly described as regeneration.

God cannot produce anything that is defective or imperfect, so the new life which the believer receives in the new birth experience is as perfect as that given to Adam in Eden. Many have difficulty in grasping the full glory and power of this truth because they see no visible, physical changes in the lives of Christians that would indicate the possession of eternal life. They do not understand that the regeneration is limited at this time to the spiritual nature and that because the unregenerate physical body is an extremely poor instrument for the expression of the wonderful new life within, very little of its glory is manifested. The life is there but it is hidden.

Regeneration, being recreation into the image of God, can be nothing other than making a man righteous.

On the other hand, remission is *to send away* or *to transfer*. It is the work which is done when Christ lifts the burden of guilt from the sinner to Himself and at the same time imputes His righteousness to the repentant one. By this means the heavenly Father is able to reckon the individual righteous or justified.

Once the terms used in the statement are defined, the statement itself can be understood. Simply, powerfully, and with great clarity it declares that unless a person has been made righteous, his sins cannot be remitted. He whose sins have not been remitted, certainly has not been justified.

The statement does not teach that regeneration is the work of sanctification. To teach this, it would have to say that regeneration follows remission, whereas it certifies that regeneration precedes remission, for without the former there can never be the latter. Contrary to popular theology, the initial work of making a man righteous is justification, not sanctification.

The references quoted to affirm that those who have been made righteous are justified, are just as clear as those saying that justification is a reckoning or an accounting of righteousness. Obviously, each position has powerful Scriptural support.

However, it should be noted that when a Bible statement is made describing justification as an accounting of righteousness, the reference contains nothing about its also being a work of regeneration, and vice versa. Each text is devoted to amplifying one side or the other and it is difficult to find one which includes both sides.

We can now consider a statement which expresses the thought obtained earlier in this study from the comparison of *Romans* 5:1 and 8:7. Found in *Steps to Christ*, 49, it deals firstly with the sinner's condition and need, and then asks how that need can be filled. It is the last sentence which states the same truth found in *Romans* 5:1 and 8:7.

"As your conscience has been quickened by the Holy Spirit, you have seen something of the evil of sin, of its power, its guilt, its woe; and you look upon it with abhorrence. You feel that sin has separated you from God, that you are in bondage to the power of evil. The more you struggle to escape, the more you *realize* your helplessness. Your motives are impure; your heart is unclean. You see that your life has been filled with selfishness and sin. You long to be forgiven, to be cleansed, to be set free. Harmony with God, likeness to Him—what can you do to obtain it?"

Consider the first phrase of the last sentence, "Harmony with God".

Harmony with God is peace with God, the same peace spoken of in *Romans* 5:1. Those who are justified have this *peace*. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The second phrase is "likeness to Him". *Likeness to Him* is a state of being which is possessed only by the regenerate. It is a condition achieved by God's re-creative power working in the repentant, not a standard of perfection acquired by being reckoned righteous. "When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element *into* human nature." *Desire of Ages*, 324.

As the sentence, "Harmony with God, likeness to Him—what can you do to obtain it?" is read, there is a strong tendency to think that reference is being made to two different things. Most people would separate *harmony with God* into the category of justification, and *likeness to Him* into the area of sanctification, but the sentence construction does not support these conclusions. To do so, it would have to read: "Harmony with God, likeness to Him—what can you do to obtain *them*", instead of, "... what can you do to obtain *it*".

No grammatical error has been made here. Harmony with God and likeness to Him are one and the same thing. The only way anyone can be at peace with God is to be like Him, for there is no fellowship between a righteous God and an unrighteous person. If these two are really one,

and if justification brings this peace, it also brings this likeness to God. Therefore, justification is the means whereby the soul is transformed into God's likeness, confirming once more the truth that "without regeneration . . . there is no remission of sins, no treasure for any perishing soul." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 113.

Harmony with God and likeness to Him are exactly the same thing because Christ is our *peace*. To have Christ is to have His life—His imputed and imparted righteousness—by which means the sinner becomes righteous in himself, though not of himself. So far as his personal state is concerned, such a person does not need to stand in God's sight as // he were righteous because he is already righteous in fact.

This does not deny that there is a way in which he can stand before God as *if* he had never sinned. There is a place for this work and a place for his being righteous in fact. This becomes clear when the apparent contradictions are reconciled.

Much more evidence could be advanced on this aspect of justification showing that its blessing is an act of making a person righteous, but sufficient evidence has been advanced to prove the point that there are two sets of statements bearing upon this subject.

As we have found, one set presents justification as a legal action whereby righteousness is *accounted* or *reckoned* to the sinner so that he stands before God not as a righteous person, but as *though* or as *if* he were righteous. Those who build their theology on this side of the question see no possibility of a man becoming righteous when God only reckons him as such.

The other set teaches that justification involves the transformation of the unrighteous into the righteous. This leads a person to question why one needs to be accounted as *if* he were righteous, when he can stand before God in righteousness even though he is not the source of this blessed state.

As honest Christians, we must believe these two sets of statements just as they read and yet see perfect harmony between both. At this stage it may seem impossible, but when the principles are studied, we will find the solution surprisingly simple.

Chapter Two

BEING MADE RIGHTEOUS

Thus far, statements have been considered which declare that justification is *accounting* a man to be righteous, and others have been read showing that justification is *making* a man to be righteous. The statements which spoke of a man being *made* righteous did not refer to this act as the work of *sanctification*, but as the work of *justification*.

We must now learn how to harmonize these apparent contradictions without in any way changing the plain meaning of the Scriptures. Thus when God's Word declares that justification is the *reckoning* of a man to be righteous so that he stands before God as if and as *though* he had not sinned and was righteous, *then this is what justification has to be*.

Likewise, when the same Word declares that justification is *making* a man to be righteous so that he is *actually righteous* before God, *then again this is what justification must be*.

The fact is that justification is *both* accounting and making. It provides two different blessings for the individual. It has to do this of necessity, for the lost sinner is burdened not with a single, but with double sources of condemnation. For too long, many people have held views of man's problem which are too narrow and limited. This results in their concept of what God must do to justify man being also too constricted. These erroneous concepts must be exchanged for a balanced and broadened view of this vital theme.

The need for this is verified in the following words: "Forgiveness has a broader meaning than many suppose." *Mount of Blessing*, 114. Unless our spiritual condition today is much better than that of the Adventists in 1889, the following warning is still true: "There is not one in one hundred who understands for himself the Bible truth on this subject [justification by faith and the righteousness of Christ] that is so necessary to our present and eternal welfare." *Review and Herald*, September 3, 1889.

In 1889, the people to whom those words were first addressed *thought* that they understood the truth on this subject. But the Word of

JUSTIFICATION

As The
ACCOUNTING OF A MAN

As The
MAKING OF A MAN

Rom. 4:5, 6 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Rom. 8:7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

1 S. M. 367 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.

Rom. 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

C.O.L. 112-3 Christ gave His life to secure for us this inestimable treasure; but without regeneration through faith in His blood, there is no remission of sins, no treasure for any perishing soul.

S. C. 62 Christ's character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as *if* you had not sinned.

M.B. 114 [God's forgiveness] is not only forgiveness *for* sin, but reclaiming *from* sin.

God's forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness *for* sin, but reclaiming *from* sin. It is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart.—M.B. 114.

the living God, the testimony of the True Witness, declared otherwise, so the responsibility to take a close and searching look at our own experience to see if we really do understand the truth on this subject, remains. It will be a fearful thing to awaken too late to a realization that we have been leaning on a false hope.

When the hungering, thirsting soul grasps the corrected view of this subject, he will truly see that: "Forgiveness has a broader meaning than many suppose. When God gives the promise that He 'will abundantly pardon,' He adds, as if the meaning of that promise exceeded all that we could comprehend: 'My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.' *Isaiah 55:7-9.*" *Mount of Blessing*, 114.

This Scripture highlights one of the most common mistakes made by human interpreters of God's Word. Men are familiar with the limited justification offered by earthly law courts, and apply the same definition to God's judiciary. They fail to recognize and heed the instruction laid down in *Isaiah 55:8, 9*, that God's ways are not man's ways. It is necessary to separate the definition of God's justification from that of man's. This means that two separate definitions must be held.

Those who think God's thoughts after Him will see that: "God's forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness *for* sin, but reclaiming *from* sin. It is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart. David had the true conception of forgiveness when he prayed, 'Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.' *Psalms 51:10*. And again he says, 'As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us'. *Psalms 103:12.*" *Mount of Blessing*, 114. Emphasis original.

The statement does not say that God's forgiveness is not a judicial act; it says it is not *merely* a judicial act. Therefore, it is a judicial act and something more as well. It is not one work but two. "It is not only forgiveness *for* sin, but reclaiming *from* sin."

God's judicial act of forgiving sin reckons or accounts a person to be righteous, while reclaiming from sin makes him righteous. The latter work is accomplished by ". . . the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart". Christ's spotless life of righteousness is reproduced within the believer and he becomes a new creature. This recreative act is as much the work of justification as accounting a man righteous.

"David had the *true* conception of forgiveness when he prayed, 'Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.' "

The declaration that David had the *true* conception of forgiveness affirms that there are other concepts which are incorrect. To have the truth on this subject then, is to understand that the creation of a clean heart and the renewal of a right spirit within are the works of justification.

This, unfortunately, is not the view held by most professed Christians today and they are thus deprived of the blessedness available in this experience.

To remedy this deficiency in understanding, our study must make clear that justification involves both the work of reckoning and of transformation. "It is not only forgiveness *for* sin, but reclaiming *from* sin." This knowledge, properly applied to the sin problem, is essential to eternal life, so everyone who would inherit the new earth must make sure that it is plain in their minds and effective in their experience.

Justification is God's solution to the sin problem. As there are two aspects to the solution, there must likewise be two condemnations requiring removal.

What are these two condemnations which hang over the heads of the unsaved? They are the guilt of sins committed in the past, and the weight of condemnation borne because of their sinful condition. These are two separate problems which must be solved in two different ways.

No one has any difficulty in seeing that the sinner is condemned on account of the sins he has committed. All know that unless forgiveness is obtained, the penalty for one wrong act is eternal death. Many, however, do not see that eternal destruction also threatens the individual because his condition is sinful.

Those who cannot see this are apt to teach and believe that every child is actually born righteous and does not pass under condemnation until he commits his first sin. This position is the natural outcome of the belief that the sinner is condemned only for what he has done. Those who adopt this stand find support for their position in Scriptures which assure us that no one will ever be punished for sins committed by another.

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." *Ezekiel* 18:20.

This is entirely just and no one should have any difficulty in understanding these provisions. For instance, Adam, the righteous father of the godless Cain, was not guilty of Abel's death. Cain, who committed the evil deed, had to bear full responsibility for it.

However, there is one sin committed by one man which is the exception to this rule and that is Adam's first act of rebellion in Eden. This one sad step doomed every descendant of Adam and Eve to condemnation unto death, irrespective of whether they ever committed a sinful act or not. Thus, if a child should be born and then die before he sinned, he would not be in the kingdom unless God's saving grace had been applied to him. When people commit iniquity, they only add a further condemnation to the one with which they were born.

THE DOUBLE CONDEMNATION AND THE DOUBLE SOLUTION

Point of Justification

From our birth till we are justified we have *done*
many sinful actions.

This is history which can never be changed.

**The Penalty For This
Is DEATH**

TO SOLVE THIS
DOUBLE PROBLEM

Christ *accounts* the sinner righteous in respect to
the unchangeable record of the past

AND

In addition we have a *state of being sinful*.
This condition can be changed.

**The Penalty For This
Is Also DEATH**

changes his heart and makes him righteous to
remove the condemnation of the evil nature.

**Only When Both Problems
Have Been Solved Is A Man
Justified.**

THEREFORE THE UNJUSTIFIED
BEAR A DOUBLE CONDEMNATION FROM
WHICH THEY MUST HAVE A DOUBLE
DELIVERANCE BEFORE THEY ARE
JUSTIFIED.

Considering the principles involved, it can be no other way. Adam was appointed by God to be the seed-bearer whereby countless offspring could enter His kingdom and eternally enjoy its blessings and benefits. While righteousness and life remained in Adam, he could transmit this to his posterity, but, before he had any offspring, sin and death entered him. From that time on, he could only give his descendants what he himself had—sin and death. Thus his one sin brought his children under sentence of eternal death as it is written:

"Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." *Romans* 5:18.

David testified to the same truth when he said, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." *Psalms* 51:5.

Thus no one can escape the natural heredity which comes down from Adam. All are born under the condemnation of death because it was impossible for our first parents to give their children the life and righteousness which they no longer had. This damnation rests upon all, not because of what they have done, but because of what they are.

As soon as the child commits his first sin, he adds a further condemnation—the guilt of transgression actually committed. This situation dictates that two solutions be applied to deal with each problem respectively. The person can then be justified and thus inherit eternal life.

That there are two different works of grace to be carried out for the unjustified is made clear in this statement, "You cannot atone for your past sins; you cannot change your heart and make yourself holy." *Steps to Christ*, 51.

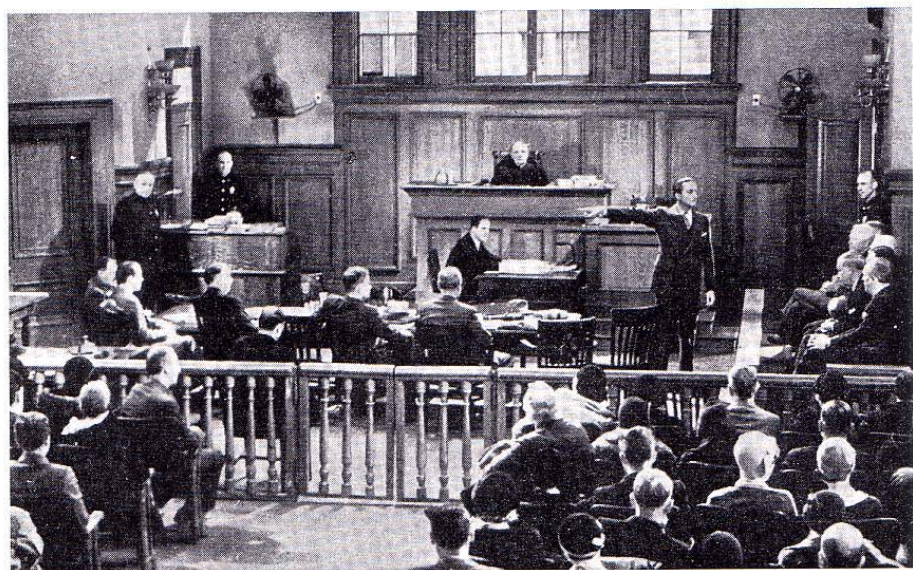
This reference appears in a context devoted to describing the way in which we are to believe in God for the *forgiveness* of sins. The previous paragraph begins with these words: "From the simple Bible account of *how* Jesus healed the sick, we may learn something about how to believe in Him for the *forgiveness* of sins."

To show what forgiveness of sins is and how it is to be received, attention is then directed to the healing of the man at the pool of Bethesda. That man's subjection and slavery to the indwelling power of his disease is presented as a picture of the domination of sin over the sinner.

"In like manner you are a sinner." *ibid.*

The statement then assures us that the way in which Christ healed the sick man is the way in which He will forgive or justify the sinner. To achieve this, Christ must perform a double operation. He must atone for our past sins and change our hearts, making them holy. Note carefully that the subject discussed is forgiveness or justification, not the progressive work of sanctification which *follows* the new birth.

Man has no capacity to do either of these works. He cannot atone for his past sins any more than he can transform his nature and make himself



With what dread is the announcement of guilt heard by the offender in an earthly court. With what infinitely greater fear will the verdict of guilty be heard by the sinner when delivered by the heavenly Judge.

holy. If left to his own resources, he would have cause for despair, but instead he can rejoice in the wonderful assurance, "But God promises to do all this for you through Christ." *ibid.*

What God has promised, He will certainly perform, provided the needy one fulfils his part of the contract. Though vital to the success of the operation, man's part is simple and easily understood. He must *believe* the promise, *confess* his sins, *give himself* to God, and *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." *ibid.*

When this work is done, the repentant one is justified. His sins have been atoned for so that he stands before God as if he had never sinned, and his nature has been transformed from sin to righteousness just as effectively and truly as the paralytic was restored to physical health. A double work has been done to solve a double problem.

None should get the impression that once this wonderful blessedness has been brought to the sinner, the work is complete and no further advancement can be made. The fact is that justification is only the beginning of the long work of fitting a man for the kingdom. Just as

marriage does not bring two people into immediate, perfect harmony, so justification does not rid the human mind of all the wrong ideas and theories learned in Satan's camp. This takes time and is called the work of reformation or sanctification—the work of a lifetime. The scope of this further work is explained in the book *Revival and Reformation*, available from Destiny Press. The study of this volume will show that there is no place in Scripture for a "once saved, always saved" doctrine.

The average person's failure to understand the full scope of God's justification is due to the common human tendency to equate heavenly things with earthly things. This was the problem which confronted Nicodemus as Christ attempted to open to him the glorious truths about justification by faith.

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

"If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?" *John 3:10-12*.

When we speak of justification by faith, we speak of heavenly things. These are more difficult to understand than earthly things and the two must not be confused. There are some important differences between them, the chief one being that earthly courts are limited in their ability to judge, whereas God is unlimited.

An earthly judge and jury are unable to read the heart. They can only try to decide whether a person did or did not do a certain action. If he is guilty of performing a criminal act, then he is under condemnation. If he did not do it, then he is justified by the court of law.

Consequently, a man may have an intense hatred for another person and a fixed purpose to murder the object of his animosity, yet he cannot be arrested or brought to trial before an earthly court until he has actually done the deed or at least attempted it.

This is not so in the heavenly judgment room. The Eternal One has an infinite capacity for reading the most secret emotions and intentions of every man. When any person has hatred within him, God knows it and recognizes the presence in him of sin and death. He knows that such a man is under condemnation, is destitute of life, and is doomed to die. This sentence is not imposed on the person by God. He has been placed in this situation by Adam's rebellion in the Garden and God's judgment is simply a recognition of what he actually is. God's work is not to condemn but to save, and it is here that He directs His energies.

"For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved." *John 3:17*.

It is unfortunate that so many feel they are under God's personal condemnation when this is not true. It is sin which condemns them to

eternal death and destruction, whereas God, recognizing the fearful peril of the soul, makes the fullest provision to deliver them from this condemnation.

The Almighty recognizes that while evil is within a person and he is intent on destroying another, he is already under condemnation whether he ever commits the action or not. This is because he is in the grip of sin's power and he will surely suffer the eternal death that is the inevitable consequence of this dominion unless he is delivered from it by God's justifying might. Many people who would stand justified in an earthly court, would find themselves under terrible condemnation in the heavenly.

These differences must be clearly understood by those who would experience and maintain the blessings of justification by faith. It is dangerous to think of God's ways and man's as being the same. They are not and never can be. Recognizing the tendency of men to think of things heavenly as if they were earthly, the Lord has told us that His ways and thoughts are different from man's.

In language so plain that no one has any excuse for erring, He said, "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord.

"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." *Isaiah* 55:8, 9.

Therefore, we can know without any further evidence that our ideas are already erroneous if we think of God as if He were a man. At first a person might react to this by claiming that he would never reduce God to the human's level, but careful thought will show that this is one of the commonest mistakes we make. It is the major reason for misjudging God's character by attributing to Him the work of destruction performed only by Satan, sinners, and sin.*

When Christ was upon earth, He confirmed God's far-reaching ability to assess the depth of condemnation resting on the sinner. He showed that a man is a sinner because of what he is, even before he carries out the impulses of his evil nature.

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

"But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." *Matthew* 5:27, 28.

In this declaration of everlasting truth, Christ tore away the mask behind which so many seek to hide. They imagine that because the evil condition of their hearts is hidden from human view, they escape condemnation, but this only demonstrates their ignorance of the

*For an indepth study of these principles, see *Behold Your God*, available from Destiny Press.

searching claims of the law. They know that while they can keep other men from knowing the evil thoughts and desires that course through their minds, they are secure from suffering human condemnation, and they think they can deal with God in the same way. What they are really doing is showing their far greater concern for man's approval than God's.

Nothing can be hidden from God and everyone needs to *realize* that condemnation is already present when the evil spirit is within, irrespective of whether the evil deed has been committed or not.

"Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." *1 John* 3:15.

Thus this apostle showed his understanding that God's condemnation reaches beyond the doing to the being. It is clear that Paul also understood this, as the following quotation shows:

"Paul dwelt especially upon the far-reaching claims of God's law. He showed how it extends to the deep secrets of man's moral nature, and throws a flood of light upon that which has been concealed from the sight and knowledge of men. What the hands may do or the tongue may utter—what the outer life reveals,—but imperfectly shows man's moral character. The law searches his thoughts, motives, and purposes. The dark passions that lie hidden from the sight of men, the jealousy, hatred, lust, and ambition, the evil deeds meditated upon in the dark recesses of the soul, yet never executed for want of opportunity,—*all these God's law condemns.*" *The Acts of the Apostles*, 424.

No clearer words are needed to reveal the extent to which the condemnation of the law reaches. It condemns the man not just for what he has done, but for what he is. Unless this truth is clearly understood and held as a personal conviction, the great subject of justification by faith cannot be comprehended or its blessedness experienced.

Chapter Three

DOUBLE PROBLEM - DOUBLE SOLUTION

So far it has been established that justification provides two solutions designed to meet two different problems. This done, we can now determine why having only one solution is insufficient. The sinner has to know exactly how to co-operate with the heavenly agencies as he seeks pardon and restoration. He must not rest his hope in one or the other of these solutions for, even if one could be applied without the other, it would still leave him condemned. In other words, if all the condemnation incurred through his sinful actions could be removed without taking away his inbred sinfulness, he would still be under judgment for what he is. He would still die eternally.

To illustrate this point, suppose that a man has been arrested and charged with two crimes, the penalty for each of which is death. One is high treason against the government of his country, and the other is murder of an important citizen.

When he is brought to trial, the first charge prosecuted is the one for murder, but his accusers prove themselves unable to sustain their case against him. He is thus freed from the condemnation arising out of this charge, but he cannot regain his freedom yet, for there is still the allegation of treason to be met.

This time he is found guilty and sentenced to death for his crime. His acquittal from the murder charge does not help him, for he dies anyway. The only hope of deliverance lay in his being found not guilty of both accusations. When the condemnation for one remains, he dies the same as if he had been guilty of both crimes.

Therefore, those who expect nothing more from justification than to be accounted righteous and who consequently do not receive the other work of inner transformation, are just as condemned as if they had cherished no expectations.

Those who confidently believe that they are accounted righteous while simultaneously rejecting the truth that justification also involves making a man righteous, are living under a false hope. They have, in

fact, received nothing at all, for it is impossible to receive one solution without the other. Either a person is accounted and made righteous, or he is neither reckoned nor transformed and is still as fully under condemnation as if he had not believed at all. *

This is the most dangerous position of all to be in, for such a person is satisfied that he has salvation when in fact he does not have it. Without a sense of need, he is not led to search for what is missing and blissfully moves on towards that terrible day when, too late, he will find that he has rested in a false hope. The disappointment and anger which will fill these poor souls in that dreadful hour is beyond human imagination. It is easy to understand how these frustrated ones will then turn upon the pastors and teachers who have wrongly instructed them and tear them to pieces.

Everyone must make sure that they have the real truth on this subject. It is necessary to understand what the condemnations are which have to be removed, the dual solutions God has provided, and the reasons for there being no other way than God's specific procedures. Let us ever remember that a message based on half the truth is not truth at all but deadly error. Every one of Satan's fatal sophistries have enough truth in them to make it appear that they have solid Bible backing but, by inducing men to trust in only half of God's provisions as if that were the whole, they deceive them into omitting that which is essential to salvation.

Each of the two solutions is specifically designed by the Infinite One to remove a particular condemnation.

One solution is designed to remove the guilt of sins committed in the past, while the other removes the condemnation resulting from the sinner's evil state of being. The first accounts a man righteous; the second makes him so.

In respect to the first solution, why has God chosen to reckon or to account righteousness to man so that he stands before Him as *though* he had never sinned? The Lord must have a good reason for this. He has and it is because there is no other way of delivering man from the guilt of sins committed throughout his past history.

No human being except Christ Himself, will ever be able to stand before God as having never sinned, for "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23.

Everyone has a record and nothing can ever change that. History is history; what has been done has been done, and not even God will wind back the hands of time so that the records of the past can be replaced with better ones. The sinner may have the deepest regret for what he has said and done; he may wish he could live the past all over again, and he

*For a fuller discussion establishing this truth, see *Acceptable Confession* available from Destiny Press.

may resolve never to repeat those things in the future, but none of these regrets and good resolutions will alter the fact that he stands before God, not as *though* he were a sinner, but as *a condemned sinner in fact*.

In the unerring records of heaven, the accounts show the sinner as he is—condemned to eternal death. If that man is to be saved, then something must be done about that account, for he can never pass the judgment with such a record against him.

What can the Lord do to justify him?

While God cannot change the fact that the man has sinned, He can, by transferring the burden of guilt to the Saviour and by imputing Christ's righteousness to the sinner's account, place him in the position where he stands as though he had never committed sin. The condemnation removed, the man is justified. In no other way can this problem be solved.

An unacceptable alternative would be to simply forget or overlook the past. This would mean that sin would remain undisposed of to threaten the peace and happiness of the universe forever. Neither God nor man would want that. Sin, and the guilt which accompanies it, must be totally obliterated through the plan of salvation.

An equally impossible alternative would be for man to pay the debt himself, but he does not have the capacity to do this. Christ's life is the only one which measures with the law and can meet its holy demands. Man cannot save himself but must depend wholly on the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour.

"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." *Selected Messages* 1:367.

This is strictly a work of *accounting* or of *reckoning*, but it takes care of all the condemnation of the past in *the only way* it can be taken care of. The past is unchangeable. God knows this and makes no attempt to alter it. Instead, He has provided a way by which the sinner can be justified without the past being changed.

It is a provision so wonderful that individuals find it difficult to believe that the responsibility for every sin they have committed up to this point is completely removed from them and replaced with the spotless record of Christ's perfect righteousness. It seems too much to grasp the fact that they stand before God as if they had never sinned. But, if these truths can be grasped as God intends that they should, the joy and gladness that will flood the soul are beyond compare. Paul calls this overwhelming emotion, blessedness.

Complete as this work is in taking care of the problem it is designed to meet, it does not and cannot reach the other condemnation which is present because of what the man is in himself. For this, another solution is necessary.

An essential difference between the history of the past and the condition of the present is that whereas the past cannot be changed, the person's present condition can. The Lord has all the creative power necessary to eradicate the old sinful nature and to implant in the believer His own precious life.

Not only can the life be changed; it must be if the soul is to escape from this sinful world to inhabit the realms of bliss. No man can enter heaven with an evil nature. He must be filled with God's character of love, not charged with a bitter stream of hatred and evil.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, *we shall be like Him*; for we shall see Him as He is." *1 John* 3:2.

"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*, 62.

When Christ's work in the sanctuary is finally concluded, He will make a positive declaration in respect to the status of all men upon earth. Some He will declare holy and righteous, while the remainder He will pronounce filthy and iniquitous. At that time, He will not be speaking about what they have done, but about what they are.

"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." *Revelation* 22:11.

Those who are then pronounced righteous and holy will be justified, while the rest will remain under eternal condemnation. A righteous and holy state of being must be achieved before that time, for when probation closes, it will be too late to make the change.

The miracle of justification is made complete when God removes the old nature which has been generated from Satan's seed, and replaces it with the new nature which springs from Christ's seed. This is the only way in which the problem of condemnation that is present because of a person's unholy state of being, can be solved.

The average person has great difficulty distinguishing between what the Bible terms the carnal mind, the stony heart, the old man, the old nature, etc., on one hand, and the fallen, sinful, mortal flesh in which it dwells and over which it rules, on the other. Most believe that the flesh and blood body and the evil, sinful nature are exactly the same thing.

Apart from those who believe in holy flesh, all know that conversion does not replace the sinful, fleshly nature with holy, immortal flesh and blood. Those, therefore, who do not distinguish between the carnal mind and the fleshly nature conclude that no change takes place within the individual until the transformation of the body at the second advent of Christ.

The Scriptures clearly teach the differences between the carnal mind and the flesh and blood nature. As a disease invades, dwells in, and rules over the human body, so the power of sin, called the carnal mind, dwells in and dominates the same human body.

Romans 8:7 confirms that this difference exists and proves that the carnal mind and the flesh are not one and the same thing.

"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." *Romans 8:7*.

The enmity which is the carnal mind is so absolute that it can never be brought into subjection to God's holy law.

But, despite the fact that the flesh is fallen, mortal, and sinful, it can be brought into subjection. It can be disciplined and trained to render a complete and perfect service to Jehovah. Christ proved this by coming and living in the same flesh that every child of Adam has, and never once committing a sin in that flesh. As Christ is our example, He showed what everyone can do if they will permit Him to link their humanity with His divinity and be in subjection to God as He was.

Paul directs our attention to the subjugation of the flesh achieved by athletes of his time as an example of the way the Christian is to subdue and train his body members. He declared that he kept his body under subjection so that he might win not a fading earthly achievement, but the crown of immortality.

"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

"And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

"I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

"But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." *1 Corinthians 9:24-27*.

Thus in one place Paul advises that the carnal mind cannot be brought into subjection to the law of God, while in another he testifies that he has brought his body under control, subjecting it to the requirements of the law. This proves that the two are not the same, for you cannot have a carnal mind that cannot be made subject to the law and at the same time bring it into subjection.



The athlete is master of his body without necessarily being the ruler over his carnal mind. To win the coveted prize, he disciplines his body until it produces peak efficiency, thus proving that the sinful, mortal, human nature can be made subject to law. The fact that this nature can be brought under control by the mind and be made to serve man's will, proves that it is not the same nature as the carnal mind which cannot be made subject to law, nor obedient to the will.

Reference back to *Romans 7* will serve to further clarify this point. There Paul speaks of having "delight in the law of God after the inward man." *Romans 7:22*.

The inward man referred to here is neither the fleshly nature nor the carnal mind; it is the intellectual nature. At this stage, even though still locked in bondage to the carnal mind, Paul's intellectual faculties had grasped something of the beauty and power of the truth and had become converted to it. His will, though still powerless to obey because of the domination of the sinful nature, was wholly dedicated to God's service. If, at this stage, his life had been in harmony with the desires of this mind, he would have been a very happy man, but it was not in harmony, for within him was a power which controlled him against his will.

This power Paul identified as something which warred against the desires of his mind and enslaved his fleshly members. "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." *Romans 7:23*.

The law or power of sin was not his members; it resided in them. In making these distinctions, he is but repeating the truth expressed in *Ezekiel 36:26*. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I

put within you: and I will take away the stony heart *out of* your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."

The stony heart is not the flesh but something which is taken out of it. In turn, it is replaced by the new heart which dwells in the same flesh. Therefore, neither the stony heart nor the new heart is the flesh nor are they in the flesh at the same time. One must be removed to give place to the other.

Any doubt that there is a distinction between the old nature and the flesh should be finally removed by studying *2 Corinthians 5:17*. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

This verse contains three positive declarations which fully confirm that the fleshly nature and the indwelling power of sin are two different things. Those three statements are: —

1. He is a new creature;
2. Old things are passed away;
3. All things are become new.

The first sentence is better translated, "He is a new *creation*". There is only one Creator. When He creates, the result is always complete and perfect, for it is impossible for Him to do anything else. Therefore, "old things are passed away", and "all things have become new". This work is *not* the *modification* or *remodelling* of that which was previously there because creation is always the act of speaking the non-existent into existence. Thus the world and everything in it was called into being and by the same procedures the heavens and the earth will be fully restored at the close of the millennium. The same principles apply to the re-creation of God's image in man when he is truly born again.

But, when one looks upon the man who has just received this gift, no visible evidence can be seen that old things are passed away and all things have become new. His body is unchanged; his appearance—apart from the look of peace and joy on his countenance—is unaltered. This fact leads many to conclude that the verse does not literally mean what it says but is describing something merely accounted to the man.

It is true that there has been no actual recreation of the physical body at this time, for this does not take place until the second advent. The creative work has been confined to the spiritual nature. It is there that old things, namely the carnal mind, have passed away, and it is there that all things have become new. Nothing at all has been done to the flesh for it is still the same afterwards as it was before.

At this point the spiritual life has been so completely restored by this creative act that it is as though the believer had never sinned. In some ways it is regrettable that this new life has to tabernacle in weak, fallen, sinful flesh which provides a very poor instrument for its expression, but just the same it is the perfect, holy, and eternal life of God in the soul. It makes a man righteous and its presence is peace and justification.

Such Then is the Work of Justification

It has "a broader meaning than many suppose. When God gives the promise that He 'will abundantly pardon,' He adds, as if the meaning of that promise exceeded all that we could comprehend: 'My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.' *Isaiah* 55:7-9. God's forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness *for* sin, but reclaiming *from* sin. It is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart. David had the true conception of forgiveness when he prayed, 'Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.' *Psalms* 51:10. And again he says, 'As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us.' *Psalms* 103:12." *The Mount of Blessing*, 114.

Thus justification is the divinely designed work which removes every source of condemnation—that which is the result of sins committed and that which is generated by the presence of an evil nature within. God removes the first by crediting Christ's righteousness to the sinner's account, and the second by eradicating the carnal mind and replacing it with the new nature.

Nothing less than this is justification. To fall short of it in any way is to remain under condemnation. Yet despite the clarity of the message and the peril involved in teaching only one side of it as if that were the whole, many folk today have dangerously limited views of what this great work is.

The lessons of history prove how tragic and disastrous this mistake is. Many comfort themselves with the thought that they are teaching the truth as far as they go and that God will give them credit for this. But consider the case of the Jews in the days of Christ. These folk were exceedingly earnest students of the Bible, but they chose to ignore the statements in the Old Testament which spoke of a Messiah who would come in humility and obscurity to die for lost mankind. However, they were fully conversant with all the texts which told of the coming of a mighty conqueror who would sweep the enemy from the field and once again establish them as the leading nation in the world.

Not seeing that there were two comings and consequently making no distinction between them, they expected the specifications of the second advent to be fulfilled at the first coming. When Christ did not appear as they had been led to expect Him by their improper study of the Bible, they rejected and crucified Him. By so doing, they forfeited all hope of eternal life. Their course and its tragic outworking is an everlasting warning of the peril involved in seeing only one half of a sacred truth.

It is easy to look back and correctly evaluate the mistakes made by former generations, but it is another thing to recognize that the same things are happening around us today. We look upon ourselves as religious, enlightened, and dedicated, but then, so were the Jews. They had the law and the prophets, they were God's chosen people, and they had been appointed to be the spiritual leaders and teachers of the world. At that time, there were none on earth who were more favoured than they, or who had less excuse for failure. So, what happened to them can certainly overtake even the best of us today.

Consider the implications of believing that only part of justification is the whole work, as is commonly done. Most modern theologians teach that it is nothing more than accounting or reckoning righteousness to the sinner. As this is a real and vital part of justification, they are able to quote many Scriptures to support their position. They do it with such confidence and authority that their hearers are filled with the assurance that they are being served sound Bible doctrine, the way of salvation itself.

They are thus led to believe that all the sins of the past have been completely forgiven, and no thought is given to the simultaneous removal of the evil nature within. Having been taught to see the work of reckoning as being the only work of justification, and never having caught a vision of the power whereby God recreates the soul, they will believe that accounted righteousness covers their sinful condition as well. Thus they think that they can come to the judgment with only a standing of perfection, covered with Christ's righteousness and in no need of actual righteousness within. They do not expect to have holy characters until the Saviour's second advent.

This is a fatal delusion.

"When He comes He is not to cleanse us of our sins, to remove from us the defects in our characters, or to cure us of the infirmities of our tempers and dispositions. If wrought for us at all, this work will all be accomplished before that time. When the Lord comes, those who are holy will be holy still. Those who have preserved their bodies and spirits in holiness, in sanctification and honor, will then receive the finishing touch of immortality. But those who are unjust, unsanctified, and filthy will remain so forever. No work will then be done for them to remove their defects and give them holy characters. The Refiner does not then sit to pursue His refining process and remove their sins and their corruption. This is all to be done in these hours of probation. It is *now* that this work is to be accomplished for us." *Testimonies* 2:355.

Those who come to the judgment expecting to be delivered from their sinfulness when Christ returns, will find themselves forever lost when Jesus stands up and says, "He that is unjust, let him *be* unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him *be* filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him *be*

righteous still: and he that is holy, let him *be* holy still. And behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." *Revelation 22:11, 12.*

Today is the day of salvation when the twofold solutions of justification must be applied while there is still time and opportunity. Those who depend upon a false hope will suffer unspeakable disappointment when the day of reckoning arrives.

Condemnation is a twofold problem.

Justification, therefore, is a twofold solution.

God's children are those who, having come to understand this, place themselves where God can effectively apply the remedies. Then, with David and with Paul, they can testify to the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity. They become the elect, precious members of the family of God, who will one day see Him face to face.

Chapter Four

THE TWO JUSTIFICATIONS

The apostle Paul had so much to say about justification by faith that one would rightly conclude that it was one of his favourite subjects. But many people, like those of his day, find his pronouncements hard to understand. I have heard some say that they cannot make sense out of *Romans* and *Galatians*.

They complain that the inspired writer has contradicted himself. Until the message of justification is truly understood, one must admit that this appears to be the case. For instance, two verses in *Romans* fall into this seemingly contradictory category. They are *Romans* 2:13 and *Romans* 3:28.

The first reads: "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified."

There is no mistaking the position taken by Paul here. By saying that only the doers of the law shall be justified, he is teaching *in this verse* that obedience to the law must be established before justification can take place.

The second one reads: "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."

This Scripture teaches the opposite from the first. According to it, no obedience is necessary in order to be justified. Instead, the believer is given this wonderful gift without the deeds of the law being present.

It is impossible to have it both ways in the same justification. Either obedience precedes the experience, or it does not. Therefore, if Paul is speaking of the *same* justification in both verses, an irreconcilable contradiction has been established.

But there are no contradictions in the Scriptures. They are inspired by one divine Author, the Holy Spirit, from whom flows only a glorious harmony of truth.

The usual approach to the problem is to ignore whichever of the two verses do not support one's theological position. Thus, those who believe that the law is to be kept by Christians are quick to quote *Romans* 2:13,

while Romans 3:28 is the strong text for those who believe that Christ released us from obedience to the law by keeping it on our behalf and in our place.

It has not been uncommon for these opposing parties to meet in conflict and vigorously fight each other with the Scriptures. One side quotes those texts which affirm that the sinner is justified without the deeds of the law, while the other points to the Scriptures which say that only the doers of the law shall be justified. This is regrettable and unfortunate, for God never intended the Bible to be used in this way.

True Christians are not involved in such methods of debate. They know that both Scriptures mean exactly what they say, that there are no contradictions in the Bible, and that the Holy Spirit will teach them what these statements really mean. When the answer comes, it is so simple and obvious that one wonders why it was not seen before.

These verses are not contradictory, for they refer to two different justifications which God applies at two widely-spaced points of time to those who fulfil the conditions required. The first in point of time is the one which declares that a man is justified without the deeds of the law. This takes place at the beginning of the Christian's experience. It is the justification consisting of two elements—forgiveness for sin and reclaiming from it—that we have been discussing in the previous chapters.

The other takes place in the judgment when a person is either eternally condemned, or his claim to everlasting life through the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour, is justified. At that time, only those who are doers of the law as a result of the earlier justification, will be judged worthy of a place in heaven.

We can now examine each of these two justifications. Looking at the one received at conversion, it can be seen that unless this blessing is available without the believer having to keep the law first, there would be no hope for any sinner.

The reasons for this lie in the fact that because of the condition in which the believer is placed before justification, he cannot possibly produce good deeds. He is an evil tree with no capacity for bearing good fruit and upon him rests the guilt for sins committed during his lifetime. Any person in this condition is incapable of bringing forth the acceptable fruits of righteousness.

"For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

"For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.

"A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh." *Luke 6:43-45.*

Jesus spelled out a law which in its application to the world of nature is well understood. No one seeks good fruit from a thorn bush, for all know that such trees only produce after their own kind. What is true in the natural world is equally true in the spiritual. An evil man—and all unjustified men are evil in Scriptural terms, no matter how fine their outward appearance—is incapable of producing righteous fruits.

Thus, if he was required to do good works in order to be justified, he would have no hope of salvation. His situation is identical with that of a thorn bush about to be uprooted because it occupies space needed for productive plants. If it had the power of speech, it would plead for its life, promising that, if only the gardener would spare it one more season, it would produce some good fruit in order to justify its existence.

The gardener would not even consider such a request, for he knows that the doomed tree has no hope of justifying its existence in this way. If it were to live for a further million years, it could do nothing but bear evil fruit, so he does not hesitate to destroy it.

Likewise, because the unjustified can never obey the law to God's satisfaction, the Lord must provide some other basis for justification than keeping the law. He must provide a way whereby the sinner can be justified without the deeds of the law.

Fortunately, the Almighty is well able to do this. As a free gift, He transfers the record of past sins to Christ and, after eradicating the old nature, implants in the sinner His own righteous seed. Being forgiven and made like unto God, the transgressor has been justified.

In practical terms this happens as follows. The convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit brings a person to the place where he is aware of his desperate sinfulness and earnestly desires deliverance. In humility and contrition he bows before the Lord, confessing his guilt and the presence of the evil nature which dominates him against his will. For the first, he pleads forgiveness. The other is given to God and he receives the new life in its place.

Provided this is done in true faith, the Lord effects the work in him. The guilt of sin is washed away and he is a new creation. At that point of time he is justified. He has not yet risen from his knees nor has he done one righteous deed, but if he should die at that moment, he would certainly come up in the resurrection of the just. He has truly been justified *without the deeds of the law*. This is the only way it can be done.

So then, Romans 3:28, "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law," can be believed exactly as it reads.

But while good deeds never *precede* justification, they will always follow it. The justified "are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." *Ephesians* 2:10.

Justification is literally salvation from sin. Anything short of this is not justification.

Despite this, there are those claiming to teach justification by faith who say that the law has been abolished and that Christians are therefore no longer required to obey it. Yet they agree that the Christian is saved from sin. This position is self-contradictory and untenable.

Sin does not exist where there is no law, for sin is law-breaking as it is written, "... sin is the transgression of the law". *1 John* 3:4. Therefore, one cannot teach that a person is saved from sin and at the same time claim that the law was nailed to the cross.

The facts are that if a person is saved *from* sin, then he must be saved *into* righteousness.

Sin is law-breaking.

Therefore, man must be saved out of law-breaking into law-keeping.

Law-breaking is disobedience.

Therefore, man must be saved out of disobedience into obedience.

This means that no man can rightfully claim to have been saved out of sin and still be committing known sins by breaking the law and disobeying God's commands. The evidence that a person has been justified is that he has forsaken his old ways and now walks in the counsels of the Most High.

There should be no difficulty in understanding the relationship between justification and law-keeping. Before justification, there can be no law-keeping, but righteous living will always attend the man who has been forgiven and cleansed.

How Then is Romans 2:13 to be Understood?

The justification referred to in Romans 3:28, deals with the initial justification which marks the transition from Satan's to God's kingdom. The one in Romans 2:13 deals with the justification which can be given only in the judgment. When this is understood, all contradiction disappears and it is possible to read and to believe both verses exactly as they are written.

Romans 2:13 is in the context of a discussion on the judgment and it stresses that only those who come to this tribunal with lives of righteous obedience, will be justified. This work is introduced in verse 5. "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God."

The next few verses contrast the fate of the disobedient and of the righteous. The former suffer indignation and wrath, while the latter are blessed with immortality.

In the judgment, God "will render to every man according to his deeds:

"To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:

"But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

"Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile:

"But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

"For there is no respect of persons with God.

"For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;

"(For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." Verses 6-13.

When will these vital decisions be made? In the judgment!

These verses make it very clear that the judgment will divide the two classes from each other. On one side will be the obedient; on the other, the disobedient. Each class will enter the day of judgment with the prospect of either emerging from it with eternal condemnation or with eternal justification. It will be the doers of the law who are justified.

After the initial justification which takes place at the beginning of the Christian experience, the believer is not immediately taken to heaven for two reasons—there is a work which God desires to do through him, and also it is necessary for him to confirm that, no matter how enticing sin may be, he has severed all connection with the kingdom of darkness and will never choose that way again. He must demonstrate that he is ready to be taken to heaven.

Those born again or justified people who once more choose a life of sin or cherish some evil habit, are thereby declaring that they love that indulgence more than God and heaven and they prefer service to Satan rather than God. When such a person comes to the judgment, the choice he has made and confirmed by the life he has chosen to live, is honoured by God. As he is still clinging to sin, God grants his desire by leaving him to the condemnation he has chosen.

However, if a person has diligently put away evil from his life and walked in God's ways, then the Lord knows that he loves Him and heaven supremely and He gladly justifies that person's inclusion in Paradise. The choice rests with the individual. We cannot come to the great judgment day practising known sins and expect to be justified, for in that day of ultimate decisions, not the hearers but the doers of the law shall be justified.

There are clear-cut distinctions between the two justifications. Here is a list of distinctions which will remove doubt about and harmonize the two.

THE TWO JUSTIFICATIONS

FIRST JUSTIFICATION

1
|
in the
New Birth

BEFORE JUSTIFICATION
1. Has record of Evil
Deeds

AND

2. Is an Evil Tree

|
Salvation

from Sin unto Righteousness

BEING JUSTIFIED

he has been pardoned for the past

AND

has been made into a
Good Tree.

SECOND
JUSTIFICATION

in the
Judgment

|
Salvation

from Earth to Heaven

THEREFORE:

He cannot do the
Deeds of the Law.

|
Here

Justified

Without the

Deeds of the Law

Rom. 3:27

Therefore, he can and does produce the
Deeds of the Law.

He has been saved from:

Sin into Righteousness

Disobedience into Obedience

Lawbreaking into Lawkeeping

BY JUSTIFICATION

|
Here

Only the Doers

of the Law

shall be Justified

Rom. 2:13

JUSTIFIES THE UNGODLY

JUSTIFIES THE GODLY

The first one justifies *the ungodly*.

The second one justifies *the godly*.

The first one is *without the deeds of the law*.

The second is for those *who keep the law*.

The first comes at the *beginning* of our Christian experience.

The second comes at the *end* of probationary time.

The first saves us from sin in this world.

The second saves us *from* this world.

The first admits us into the family of God in *the church*.

The second admits us into the family of God *above*.

It is possible to have the first justification and never gain the second, but only those who have *both* the first and the second will ever enter the kingdom of God.

For this generation, living as it does in the very hour of God's judgment, it is vital that this great subject be thoroughly understood and effectively applied. We have by no means exhausted the topic, but sufficient has been said to demonstrate that the first justification is a double solution designed to meet a dual problem. Hopefully, all will now *realize* the danger of accepting a doctrine of justification offering only one solution where two are needed which leaves the person with nothing but the fatal delusion that he is saved. Such a sense of false security is not likely to be broken until it is too late to find and apply the truth.

For those who do find and apply the truth, justification by faith and the righteousness of Christ is an experience of wonderful blessedness and *peace*. May it come to be the living joy of everyone who studies the principles laid out in this and kindred publications.