

James 2:20 You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless?

James is speaking of the works of faith, not the works of the law as in legalism. What he says is very clear: if we claim faith, but our fellow man sees unrighteous works, or no works to correspond with the professed faith, then that faith is dead. If there is a genuine faith, it will be revealed in the “fruit of faith”—good works.

Both your justification and your sanctification are made possible by Christ’s righteousness, not your own. You are completely dependent upon Him, but you must co-operate with Him and choose obedience. Your faithful Christian life will lead you to glorification. (i.e. At the second coming of Christ you will be changed to perfection and your sinful nature taken away).

As we grow in grace, we are strengthened by diligent Bible study, prayer, and obedience to God’s leading. These practices strengthen the spiritual nature and give power to overcome temptation. Never fail to consecrate your life to God first thing each day, and ask Him to guide you. To walk without Him leads to spiritual disaster. Walk with Him at all times, even as Enoch did many years ago. To walk with Jesus in this life will mean walking and talking with Him in the life to come.

If by faith we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, we will triumph at last. Christ is our righteousness.

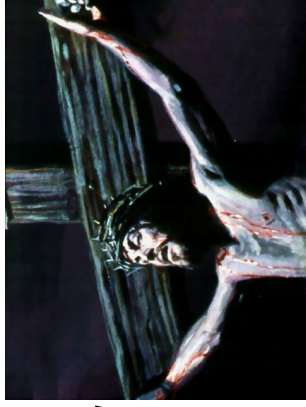
Are you thankful that Jesus is your Righteousness? _____

Life’s VITAL ANSWERS

Preparing for Eternity.



If Adam had not sinned, it would have been possible for him to form a righteous character simply by obeying God's law. Because he failed to obey God, he opened the way for the development of a sinful nature, instead of a sinless human nature, and all humanity having descended from Adam, has inherited the tendency toward evil. Therefore, it is an impossibility for humanity to be righteous. Basically people are sinful and unholy and cannot perfectly obey God's law. Our righteousness is as 'filthy rags' in the sight of God. Isaiah 64:6. Not one person can claim righteousness. Romans 3:10. However, Christ has made a way of escape for us. Where Adam failed, Christ was victorious.



"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, page 67.

1 John 4:19 We love because He first loved us.

God has made the first move. He loved us even when we were sinners; (though He hated the sin). When we understand God's love toward us it generates a desire to serve Him and to respond in love. Love is the motivating principle of action which awakens in us the desire to be righteous. It is a help in this study to understand the meaning of the following words:

RIGHTEOUSNESS	Rightness, as applied to a person: a right relationship between God and humanity.
FAITH	Complete trust in God.
GRACE	Favour or kindness. (With sinful humanity it is unmerited favour).

belief in the truth.

Our sanctification is only made possible through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Without His pleading in our lives we could never achieve holiness. His work is to help us attain fitness for heaven.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

Hebrews 10:16 "This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds."

The gospel does not free us from obedience to the law of God, rather, it frees us from the law's condemnation. God's law is unchangeable, a transcript of His perfect character. The New Covenant message is that God enables us to keep His law, because in our own strength it is impossible. He writes His laws in our minds – they become part of us. We are not freed from keeping them, but given the power to obey them. Willing obedience to God's laws is a service of love. It is in reality the test of discipleship.

1 John 5:3 2:3 This is _____
and his commands are not burdensome, We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands.

Here is the test between those who love God supremely, and those who give only lip service.

Romans 3:31 Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law.



Jesus wants us to demonstrate our love for him by trusting that His grace can help us keep His commandments.

Faith and the law cannot be separated. We are not saved by faith and a rejection of the law; we are saved by faith alone, and this faith alone, leads us to honour or "establish" God's law. Obedience is indeed, the fruit of faith. "The just shall live by faith," Romans 1:17.

The new Christian is like a baby, but as he/she grows in grace (i.e. the development of Christian character), an understanding of truth increases, reflecting more fully the presence of Jesus in the life. Growth does not qualify us for salvation, but if we do not grow, our salvation is in danger. When one is connected with the Saviour, there will be growth. A backslidden Christian is not lost, he/she can still receive eternal life, but unless he/she consecrates the life fully to Jesus, he/she will not grow, but degenerate, and perhaps lose the way altogether.



We are sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

Philippians 3:13,14 Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, _____ for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Growing in grace is not automatic after one has accepted Jesus as Saviour. We cannot sit back and say, "Take over God". Christ works through us, not independently of us. Our part is to place our will on the side of God's will. Then in His strength we succeed. In other words, we are constantly maintaining our faith in Him.

Colossians 3:1,17 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, _____ of God...And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Here is outlined what Christ has already done for us ("if then you were raised with Christ") 'our justification', with our response ("seek those things which are above") 'our sanctification'. The two cannot be separated: they go hand in hand. Notice carefully, we take no credit to self for anything – it is all in the name of Jesus.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through

JUSTIFICATION

The divine act (i.e. Christ's sacrifice) by which God declares the penitent sinner righteous. (Declared Righteousness).

SANCTIFICATION

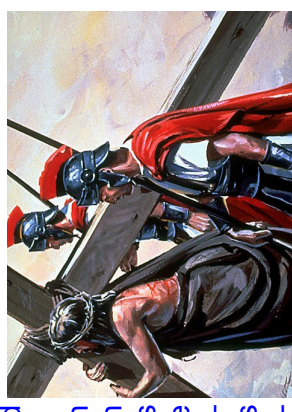
To set apart: holiness.

Galatians 2:16 Know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be _____ in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

It is impossible for us to be right with God because of our good works, or by keeping God's law. The fact is, we cannot keep God's law in our own strength. Our nature is depraved and predisposed to evil. As we accept Jesus Christ, our faith lays hold of divine power, and we become one with Christ. The converted sinner is declared righteous. It is not faith that saves; it is Jesus Christ: but faith is the medium by which we take hold of Jesus.

Romans 5:8-10 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Since we have now been _____, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! 10 For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!



We are saved from the penalty of our sins because Jesus' blood covers them all – we are justified by His blood. Our justification was made possible when Jesus died and was raised again almost 2,000 years ago. When we believe, and by faith accept our justification we are declared righteous in the sight of God. Not our own righteousness, but His righteousness, therefore we are reconciled to God. He has accepted His Son's sacrifice, and because we have accepted His Son, we too are accepted.

Romans 3:24-26 ...and are _____ through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.



Our justification is given freely by God's favour and kindness. All sins are accounted for. Those who believe in Jesus are justified. Accounted righteous just as if they had never sinned.

Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

A CHANGED LIFE

1 Thessalonians 4:3 It is _____: that you should avoid sexual immorality;

As used in the New Testament, the words justification and sanctification are essentially equivalent terms. To be justified has often been regarded as the result of conversion. When we accept Christ, we are justified in a moment. This is true, but justification does not end there. We continually need justification, which was made available at the cross, because of the fact that we are sinners. Sin remains in us until we are changed at the resurrection, but it will not reign in the one who trusts in Jesus. Because of Jesus' sacrifice, the Christian is saved from the penalty of sin. Because of the indwelling Christ in the life, the Christian is saved from the power of sin. Because of the Christian's faithfulness unto death, he/she will ultimately be saved from the presence of sin.

The New Testament writers had a lot to say about the Christian's

sanctification or holiness of life. They show quite clearly that the way one lives is rather important for the professed Christian. If our justification (declared righteousness) does not lead to sanctification (holiness of life), then the Christian is not revealing the fruit of a genuine faith. If we are credited with Christ's righteousness, it will be infused in our lives, and demonstrated before those with whom we come in contact. The important thing to remember is that we can take no credit for either our justification, or our sanctification – it is all Christ's righteousness, which we have by faith alone. Our salvation is NOT a result of our holiness of life, but of our acceptance of Jesus' death and resurrection. It is our justification which gives salvation. Justification is the root, and sanctification is the fruit.

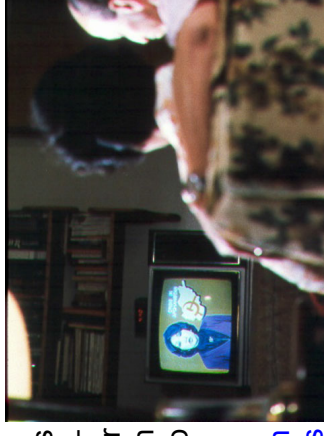
Romans 6:19 I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness.

Paul admonishes that the members (body and parts) be used for righteousness. Once they were used for sinful purposes, but after conversion this cannot be so, they are used to glorify God.

Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

There is a change in the way of life of a Christian. He/she is not worldly, but transformed, reflecting the lovely character of Jesus.

2 Peter 3:18 But _____ and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.



As God's children we will seek more of God's Word and less of the world's words.