

CHRIST'S ALL-ENCOMPASSING RIGHTEOUSNESS

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Christ's all-encompassing righteousness is our only hope as we rapidly come to the close of this earth's history. Make no mistake about it, Jesus is coming soon! The events taking place around us point to the fulfillment of the prophecies in Daniel, Matthew, and Revelation. Everything seems to be shaking.....political problems are evident around the world, moral and cultural decay is rampant, the economies of the world are a hairs-breadth away from collapse, natural disasters are increasingly horrific.....some may say, oh that's just cyclical, you can believe what you wish, I believe they are signs of Christ's soon coming.....ecumenical movements are underway to neutralize the plain "Thus saith the Lord." Christ is preparing to return in the near future. Of course, Seventh-day Adventists should never predict the day or the hour, but we have been given the warnings in scripture to tell us it is soon.

What a day to be alive! What a time to be part of God's remnant church proclaiming His three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-12 which portray Christ's righteousness and an appeal to turn back to the true worship of God and to identify yourself with His Biblical truth!

This is no time for half-hearted faith or just church as usual... friends, it is time to plead to the Lord for genuine revival and reformation as we prepare to see Jesus come again very soon. This call for revival and reformation is not something invented by the 2010 Annual Council. It is not something that can be commissioned by a committee and pronounced done. We cannot produce revival and reformation----only the Holy Spirit can. This call for revival and reformation is not some legalistic, "pull-yourself-up-by-your-own-bootstraps" initiative. It is centered in Christ and Him alone. He calls us to accept His righteousness and to be empowered by the Holy Spirit to accomplish the last great work of proclaiming Christ, His righteousness, and His soon coming. This is the message that has been entrusted to the Seventh-day Adventist Church as His last-day remnant people. It is a heaven-borne call from God Himself found throughout the Bible in passages ranging from Joel 2, Acts 2, Hosea 6, and II Peter 3:14 which instructs—in the context of the second coming of Christ—, "Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless"

In preparation for the second coming of Jesus, we, like ancient Israel, are to humble ourselves, seek God's face, and turn from our wicked ways. We must give ourselves entirely to Christ for it is only in Him—as Paul declared in Acts 17:28—that we can truly “live and move and have our being”. At this critical moment in earth's history, with the world collapsing around us, let us humble ourselves before the Lord realizing that our only hope is in Christ and His righteousness.

Addressing this need for entire surrender to Christ, we read in Selected Messages, Book 1, page 121, that, “A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work.” Let us make it our first work. Let us look only to Christ for our salvation and eternal life. Let us realize that He has provided for us His all-encompassing righteousness.

In the wonderful new Spirit of Prophecy compilation, True Revival, we read on page 15 that, “A revival and reformation must take place, under the ministration of the Holy Spirit.” The pen of inspiration continues by explaining that, “Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits, and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of

righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit. Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this they must blend.”

I am sure you know that some have accused Seventh-day Adventism of being legalistic—that we are a people who promote righteousness by works. But dear friends, nothing could be further from the truth! As we understand our need of revival and reformation in these last days of earth’s history, let us fully realize that the foundation of revival and reformation is nothing less than a full and correct acceptance of Christ and His all-encompassing righteousness. The voices of Seventh-day Adventists should be the foremost in proclaiming that salvation is through Christ and Christ alone! The two great provisions of salvation—justification and sanctification—cannot be separated for they constitute the fullness of Christ’s all-encompassing righteousness.

For various reasons and at various times, there seems to be confusion about justification and sanctification and how they relate to each other and our salvation. Rifts are created in churches and between members about this subject. Some promote justification to the exclusion of sanctification and

arrive at what has been termed “cheap grace.” Others focus almost exclusively on sanctification and arrive at what has been termed as “perfectionism” or a self-initiated form of legalistic salvation by works. At times there have been swings of emphasis from one component of salvation to the other. But God’s all-encompassing righteousness involves the completeness of both justification and sanctification. It is His plan, not ours. It is His way of bringing us into an immediate and long-term relationship with Him in preparation for spending eternity with Him. It is His divinely appointed means of not only calling us good but making us good; of changing both our standing in the books of heaven and our character in the life here on earth.

God’s plan of salvation is so marvelous and assuring and yet incomprehensible in every detail. It is so simple that a child can understand it yet so grand that we will be studying it throughout eternity. Jesus, the Son of God, came to this earth to become one of us, His creatures whom He created. He lived a perfect and sinless life on this earth, died for us, rose to life, intercedes for us in the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary, and will soon return to take us to be with Him.

But God has entrusted into the hands of His last-day people the awesome privilege of proclaiming those three angels’ messages of Revelation 14 which focus on Christ and His righteousness

and turning people back to the true worship of God. We are to be ambassadors for Christ proclaiming His all-encompassing righteousness. Testimonies for the Church, Volume 9, page 19, explains how, “In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the Word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import---the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels’ messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention.”

We are to lift up the true worship of God, our Creator, giving glory to Him and proclaiming that His judgment has come. We are to proclaim that Babylon has fallen bringing spiritual confusion to people and that we are to return to a pure and simple understanding of God’s plan of salvation. We are to warn against worshiping the beast or his image and receiving the mark of the beast in your forehead or hand signifying that you have accepted the authority which has claimed to change God’s law and promote a false teaching of Biblical truth and Christ’s all-encompassing righteousness.

Seventh-day Adventists have been called to proclaim the truth as it is in Jesus. He and He alone is our salvation. Paul declares unequivocally in Ephesians 2:8-10, “For by grace you have been

saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone would boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

Make no mistake, it is the grace of God and His power alone that accomplishes this in us as we accept the justifying robe of Christ’s righteousness that proclaims us perfect before the eyes of God. Then, as we immediately accept the power that accompanies justification, Christ begins to sanctify us—transforming us into his glorious image. This entire change is the all-encompassing righteousness of Christ. That is why Paul, in Philippians 2, after describing the incredible humility of Christ in coming to die for us as a perfect substitute for us as sinners, proclaims in verses 12 and 13, “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.” This is not a call for salvation by works. This is a direct call for righteousness by faith in God “who works in you both to will and to do...” It tells us to focus on our relationship to Christ and allow His justifying and sanctifying power to bring us into a right relationship with Him so we can spend eternity with Him. When we accept Jesus into our lives, He does something miraculous and changes us into His likeness.

The miraculous Spirit-filled conversion process takes place. It is only something that God can produce. He justifies and allows us to connect with Him so that we become more and more like Him. That is why drunkards become sober. That is why loose-living people become moral. That is why mean-spirited individuals become peacemakers. That is why liars become honest. That is why filthy-minded people become pure. That is why evolutionists become creationists. That is why selfish, self-centered people become selfless, generous benefactors. That is why the unconverted become converted.....it is all due to the power of God. God changes our lives and we begin to produce the fruits of the Spirit. As James declares in James 2:17, "Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead." By focusing our complete attention on Christ and His righteousness we are placed in a right relationship with Him and His power changes us from within.

The provision for this right relationship is described in one of the most fantastic verses of the Bible, II Corinthians 5:21, where Paul proclaims, "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." God, the Father, provided His perfect Son as a sacrifice for our sins that we would be able to take on the perfect righteousness of Christ. What an incredible plan of salvation.....no wonder we will be studying it throughout eternity! No wonder when

we get to heaven having been given crowns to wear that we will take them off and throw them at Jesus' feet in complete gratitude and love for His saving power! No wonder we will sing His praises now and throughout eternity! No wonder we proclaim God's unbelievable love by singing "Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost, but now am found. Was blind but now I see." This is the "born again" experience Jesus proclaimed in John 3:3, ".....Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

This born again experience, all through Christ's power, makes of us an entirely new person. II Corinthians 5:17 states, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation: old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." Through the leading of the Holy Spirit, as we confess our sins and fall at the foot of the cross before Christ, we are cleansed of our sins and recreated into the image of God. John declares in I John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." John also declares in John 1:12 and 13, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John further declares in 1 John 5:4, "For whatever is

born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world-----our faith.” This is God’s all-encompassing righteousness.....we are saved by grace and we live by faith.....all because of and through Christ Jesus our Saviour and Lord! That is why we can join Paul in proclaiming Galatians 2:20, “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” Ultimately, Paul simply says in Philippians 1:21, “For to me, to live is Christ.....”

Turn with me to a remarkable explanation by Paul of God’s all-encompassing righteousness as he explained it to an uncircumcised pagan convert, Titus.

Titus, as a young pastor, was left on the island of Crete by Paul. Crete was the center of what had been the ancient and powerful Minoan civilization which had rivaled Mesopotamia and Egypt. It is a large island south of Greece. I remember as a small boy along with my mother, sister, and other missionaries that our ship stopped by Crete when we were evacuated from Egypt by the United States Sixth Fleet during the 1956 Suez Crisis. It is a mountainous island with Mt Ida, where according to legend and Greek mythology, the pagan god Zeus was born. The people on Crete at the time of Paul and Titus were untrustworthy and lazy. They were pagans. They were

influenced by half-converted Jews emphasizing myths and laws. Crete was a crossroads for trading with many visitors erupting into strong disagreements. In the book of Titus, Paul counsels Titus and fellow believers both then and now regarding practical Christian living.

In Titus 2:11-13 he writes, “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.” Oh, I am looking for that “blessed hope and glorious appearing” of Christ. Aren’t you?! About three months ago, I lost my precious father. He was a strong church leader, a wonderful father, and one of my best friends. Because of Christ’s grace and power and the promise of His soon return, I will see my father again! Praise God for Christ’s soon return.

Paul goes on in chapter 3 to explain about Christian living and supporting authorities. Verses 1 to 3 say, “Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men. For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, decided, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one

another.” Notice what Paul says in verse 4, “But when the kindness and the love of God our Saviour toward man appeared.....” God’s kindness and love is all-powerful and produces something marvelous in us. In verses 5 and 6 Paul indicates that it was “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.” Paul shows that we are justified through Christ’s power alone--- --“according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration” and sanctified through Christ’s power alone----- the “renewing of the Holy Spirit whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior.” All our righteousness, either in the books of heaven or in our lives on earth, comes through the grace and power of Christ alone.

Paul goes on to say in verse 7 “that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” We are justified by Christ. We are covered with His robe of righteousness. This is imputed to us. We appear perfect before the Father just as if we had not sinned. That is Christ’s righteousness.

In verse 8 Paul admonishes us by saying, “This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.”

The good works are the manifestation of the sanctifying power of Christ. The Holy Spirit works in us to make us more and more like Christ. We are totally dependent on our relationship with Christ for sanctification. That is Christ's righteousness.

The Spirit of Prophecy points to the Biblical truth of Christ's righteousness. It gives us some wonderful insights into a full understanding of Christ's all-encompassing righteousness. I want to share some of these encouraging statements. Some of the most encouraging statements are in the marvelous little book, *Steps to Christ*. There are some wonderful sections that beautifully explain our relationship to Christ in justification and sanctification-----all due to His all-encompassing righteousness.

Two passages which are so helpful are found on pages 62-63 and 70-71. We have placed these beautiful quotations in your hands today. Let's take the time to read them:

Pages 62-63---"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.

“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.

“More than this, Christ changes the heart. He abides in your heart by faith. You are to maintain this connection with Christ by faith and the continual surrender of your will to Him; and so long as you do this, He will work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. So you may say, ‘The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the son of God who loved me, and gave Himself for me.’ So Jesus said to His disciples, ‘It is not yet that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.’ Then with Christ working in you, you

will manifest the same spirit and do the same good works,--- works of righteousness, obedience.

“So we have nothing in ourselves of which to boast. We have no ground for self-exaltation. Our only ground of hope is in the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and in that wrought by His Spirit working in and through us.”

Pages70-71---“By faith you became Christ’s, and by faith you are to grow up in Him,---by giving and taking. You are to give all,---your heart, your will, your service,---give yourself to Him to obey all His requirements; and you must take all,---Christ, the fullness of all blessing, to abide in your heart, to be your strength, your righteousness, your everlasting helper,---to give you power to obey.

“Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, ‘Take me, O Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in Thee.’ This is a daily matter. Each morning consecrate yourself to God for that day. Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried out or given up as His providence shall indicate. Thus day by day you may be giving your life into the hands of God,

and thus your life will be molded more and more after the life of Christ.

“A life in Christ is a life of restfulness. There may be no ecstasy of feeling, but there should be an abiding, peaceful trust. Your hope is not in yourself; it is in Christ. Your weakness is united to His strength, your ignorance to His wisdom, your frailty to His enduring might. So you are not to look to yourself, not to let the mind dwell upon self, but look to Christ. Let the mind dwell upon His love, upon the beauty, the perfection of His character. Christ in His self-denial, Christ in His humiliation, Christ in His purity and holiness. Christ in His matchless love,--- this is the subject for the soul’s contemplation. **It is by loving Him, copying Him, depending wholly upon Him, that you are to be transformed into His likeness.**”

No wonder Paul proclaims in Hebrews 4:14-16, “Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

What a wonderful Savior who came to this earth to take our place and to provide a way of escape for us. What love and humility Christ demonstrated to come to die for us. Christ is our all in all. He has provided salvation for us through His all-encompassing righteousness. We are to depend totally and completely on Him and His righteousness and to look to Him. Selected Messages, Book 1, page 256, indicates that, “In taking upon Himself man’s nature in its fallen condition, Christ did not in the least participate in its sin.....We should have no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ. Our faith must be an intelligent faith, looking unto Jesus in perfect confidence, in full and entire faith in the atoning Sacrifice....Divine power is placed upon man, that he may become a partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. This is why repenting, believing man can be made the righteousness of God in Christ.”

Let us never claim any righteousness of our own. Let us always look to Jesus. We cannot work our way to heaven by our own efforts or self-righteousness. It is all found in Christ and His all-encompassing righteousness.

In *The Desire of Ages*, page 310, we read, “The righteousness which Christ taught is conformity of heart and life to the revealed will of God. Sinful man can become righteous only as

they have faith in God and maintain a vital connection with Him. Then true godliness will elevate the thoughts and ennoble the life. Then the external forms of religion accord with the Christian's internal purity."

Let no one in the Seventh-day Adventist Church think of themselves as better than anyone else. Let no one accuse others of not being holy or perfect. We are all sinners at the foot of the cross in need of a Savior who provides for us His all-encompassing righteousness in justification and sanctification. We owe everything to Jesus and our relationship with Him.

In "True Revival," page 50, we read, "This spiritual relation can be established only by the exercise of the personal faith. This faith must express on our part supreme preference, perfect reliance, entire consecration. Our will must be wholly yielded to the divine will, our feelings, desires, interests, and honor identified with the prosperity of Christ's kingdom and the honor of His cause, we constantly receiving grace from Him, and Christ accepting gratitude from us."

It is in this entire consecration to Christ and to allowing Him to work in our lives to help us stay close to Him and His Word that the beautiful quotation from Christ's Object Lessons, page 69, can be realized, "Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of

Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.”

The character of Christ is perfectly reproduced in our lives when we lean completely on Christ alone. It is not in ourselves to accomplish this. We must daily allow the Holy Spirit to change us more and more into the likeness of Christ. This is the work of a lifetime. We are to ask for Christ’s character in our lives as we learn practical obedience to His Word through His power.

What a wonderful opportunity to allow God’s Spirit to work in our lives. We owe everything to Christ’s sanctifying power to change us into His likeness. He has an ideal for us and it is only possible through depending on His righteousness and work in our lives.

The Desire of Ages, pages 311-312 share some profound thoughts about our complete dependence on Christ and His character. “God’s ideal for His children is higher than the highest human thought can reach. ‘Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.’ This command is a promise. The plan of redemption contemplates our complete recovery from the power of Satan. Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil, and He has made provision that the Holy

Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning.....**The ideal of Christian character is Christlikeness. As the Son of man was perfect in His life, so His followers are to be perfect in their life.** Jesus was in all things made like unto His brethren. He became flesh, even as we are. He was hungry and thirsty and weary.....He shared the lot of man; yet He was the blameless Son of God. He was God in the flesh. His character is to be ours.....But Christ reaches us where we are. He took our nature and overcame, that we through taking His nature might overcome.....**Now by His divinity He lays hold upon the throne of heaven, while by His humanity He reaches us. He bids us by faith in Him attain to the glory of the character of God. Therefore are we to be perfect, even as our ‘Father which is in heaven is perfect.’”**

In other words, we can only be perfect as we “by faith in Him attain to the glory of the character of God.” We must rely wholly upon His grace and character since we cannot produce that of ourselves. We lean completely on His power to change us to become more and more like Christ. He has that power to change lives and we are to allow Him to work in us so that His character becomes ours through His power.

We are not to work towards what may be termed “perfectionism” reflecting a legalistic checklist or pulling ourselves up by our own power. We must not point out the

faults of others thinking that we are better than they are. We are not to bring about confusion and division within the church with accusations that we are more righteous than others. We are not to think of ourselves as perfect except that we are perfect in Christ's righteousness----what He does for us justifying us and what He does through us sanctifying us. All of this is through the righteousness of Christ-----it is nothing of ourselves. We are to be unified in Christ in word and action.

Selected Messages, Book 1, page 259, tells us, "The secret of unity is found in the quality of believers in Christ. The reason for all division, discord, and difference is found in separation from Christ. Christ is the center to which all should be attracted; for the nearer we approach the center, the closer we shall come together in feeling, in sympathy, in love, growing into the character and image of Jesus."

We are not to have any thoughts that we are righteous in our own right or that we can improve ourselves through our own efforts. We are completely dependent on Christ for any changes in our lives as we submit to Him. Let us never boast of being perfect or having attained perfection. Listen to what Ellen White indicates in that wonderful new compilation entitled, "True Revival," page 62, "No one who claims holiness is really holy. Those who are registered as holy in the books of Heaven are not aware of the fact, and are the last ones to boast

of their own goodness. None of the prophets and apostles ever professed holiness, not even Daniel, Paul, or John. The righteous never make such a claim. The more nearly they resemble Christ, the more they lament their unlikeness to Him; for their consciences are sensitive, and they regard sin more as God regards it. They have exalted views of God and of the great plan of salvation; and their hearts, humbled under a sense of their own unworthiness, are alive to the honor of being accounted members of the royal family, sons and daughters of the King Eternal.”

I want to leave with you a beautiful little compilation of Spirit of Prophecy encouragement entitled “False Ideas on Justification by Faith.” The content is primarily from the book “Faith and Works” by Ellen White. It is a wonderful encouragement to read this booklet. It will not take you long. We are grateful for the supporting work of Light Bearers Ministry that has printed this very helpful booklet. Light Bearers does so much to share Christian literature around the world as do our wonderful denominational publishing houses. Read this booklet and be blessed by the marvelous messages such as found on pages 18 to 19:

“When men learn they cannot earn righteousness by their own merit of works, and they look with firm and entire reliance upon Jesus Christ as their only hope, there will not be so much

of self and so little of Jesus. Souls and bodies are defiled and polluted by sin, the heart is estranged from God, yet many are struggling in their own finite strength to win salvation by good work. Jesus, they think, will do some of the saving; they must do the rest. They need to see by faith the righteousness of Christ as their only hope for time and for eternity. God has given men faculties and capabilities. **God works and cooperates with the gifts He has imparted to man, and man, by being a partaker of the divine nature, and doing the work of Christ may be an overcomer and win eternal life."**

On pages 20-21 we read about the all-encompassing righteousness of Christ: "The soul temple is to be sacred, holy, pure and undefiled. There must be a copartnership in which all the power is of God and all the glory belongs to God. The responsibility rests with us. We must receive in thoughts and in feelings, to give in expression. The law of the human and the divine action makes the receiver a laborer together with God. It brings man where he can, united with divinity, work the works of God. Humanity touches humanity. **Divine power and the human agency combined will be a complete success, for Christ's righteousness accomplishes everything."**

This is truly Christ's all-encompassing righteousness. We have nothing of ourselves to boast. We are totally dependent on Christ.

So how should we live in these last days of earth's history just before Christ's soon coming? How should we understand the plan of salvation?

Cheap grace will not do it. It denies the power of the Holy Spirit to change the life day by day to become more and more like Christ. Legalism will not do it. It blocks the only way to salvation---total dependence on Jesus Christ, our only way to salvation. An intellectual, higher critical approach will not. It destroys the very miracle of conversion and sanctification and strips God's salvation of its power to change lives.

It is only Christ's all-encompassing righteousness of justification and sanctification that will save you, change you, and nurture you into a true disciple of Christ. It is something that Jesus does both for you and in you.

As that beautiful old hymn, "Nothing but the Blood," found in the hymnal "Christ in Song" number 93 says, "What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus; What can make me pure within? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. Oh, precious is the flow that makes me white as snow; No other fount I know, nothing but the blood of Jesus."

In that wonderful second chapter of Philippians, God shared with us the incredible plan of salvation through Christ, our Righteousness. Paul writes in verses 3-11: "Let this mind be in

you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bond-servant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

What a marvelous God! What a marvelous plan of salvation! What a blessing to obtain Christ’s all-encompassing righteousness. In True Revival we read on page 45, “There is no excuse for sin, or for indolence. Jesus has led the way, and He wishes us to follow in His steps. He has suffered, He has sacrificed as none of us can, that He might bring salvation within our reach. We need not be discouraged. Jesus came to our world to bring divine power to man, that through His grace, we might be transformed into His likeness.”

Through His grace we can have divine power. Through His grace we can have His character. Through His grace we can be made more and more like Him. Christ came to this earth. He

lived a sinless life, died for us, rose for us, intercedes right now for us in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary as our High Priest, and will soon put on His kingly robes and return to this earth at His second coming as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. What a wonderful day that will be!----The culmination of all of earth's history----The end of the great controversy----the reward of His wonderful plan of salvation----the ultimate revelation of His all-encompassing righteousness! We will go home to be with Him forever never to be tempted again.....never to be separated from our Lord! As Pastor George Brown said in his devotional at the 2005 General Conference session in St Louis, "When we get to heaven, we will be justified, sanctified, glorified, and satisfied!"

Will you accept Jesus anew today? Will you accept His justifying power to give you a perfect robe of righteousness? Will you receive His sanctifying power to change your life to become more and more like Him? Will you let Him work in you, as Paul says in Philippians 2:13, "to will and to do for His good pleasure?" Will you joyfully submit to Christ's all-encompassing righteousness? If so, will you stand to your feet in commitment as you submit to His power and righteousness?