

Holiness And Righteousness Have Been Made Unto us!

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We've Placed The Burden On Us

I have taught often how important it is for us as Christians to live righteously. I have shared and held the conviction that God expects us to live Holy. Consider this verse:

1Pe 1:16 "because it is written, "**Be holy, for I am holy.**"

I have stressed our need to live godly lives believing ***that our faith and prayers are affected by it.*** I believed God wanted us to live Holy so that we can walk with him. I remember receiving insight into the purpose of ***character***; what does character do for us? Character is honesty, integrity, truthfulness, faithfulness, goodness, kindness, self control, being fair minded, treating others with respect and no favoritism, etc...why should we work for such things in our life or want them built into our children's lives? Some might say, "Well, character will help you in life to make good decisions, be a hard worker, get ahead in life, to be able to withstand hard times, bad things, and be someone others can trust and depend upon." All of this is true, character makes for a better life all around; however, **the real purpose of character is so that we can walk with God, be with God, relate to God, and God can walk with us.** I was very glad to understand that...but even this revelation lacks understanding because what it does is **place the burden and effort on us** to have character.

For example, **patience is a virtue of character**. When we want patience developed or built up in us we have often thought that it comes through time, experiences, maturity from living and overcoming the difficulties of life. We have been taught that if we want patience that we should pray for it and what is it that we are to expect? If you pray for patience God will send trials, struggles, and problems so that we learn patience. Isn't that what we've been told? Character is supposed to be built in us by our response to life issues. I share this because *character* is related to ***righteousness and holiness***. Again this understanding **places the burden of patience upon us...**

We are called to ***holiness and righteousness*** as these scriptures teach:

2Co 7:1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, ***let us cleanse ourselves*** from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, ***perfecting holiness in the fear of God.***

1Th 4:7 ***For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness.***

Heb 12:14 ***Pursue*** peace with all *people*, ***and holiness***, without which no one will see the Lord:

All of this positions us to believe that holiness, righteousness, even character are outside of us and need to be developed or pursued as Hebrews 12:14 exhorts us to do. We stand in need or lacking these things.

If we believe that God is ***requiring us and demanding of us*** to be ***holy and righteous*** before him based upon our own efforts **that places all of the burden upon us too.**

Consider these verses again:

Mt 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, **let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.**

Lu 14:27 "And **whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.**

Luke 14:33 "So likewise, whoever of you **does not forsake all that he has** cannot be My disciple."

Matt. 10:39 "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who **loses his life for My sake will find it.**"

James 2:20 "But do you want to know, O foolish man, that **faith without works** is dead?

We can easily base our Christian walk to be holy and righteous before the **Lord back upon us and our efforts to take up our cross, to deny ourselves, and to lose our life for His sake!** After all these are the words of Jesus! Then James the apostle wrote that our ***faith without works is dead***. We interpret these verses readily as putting the burden back on us to live holy. We must take up, we must deny, we must lose our life, we must work for the blessings, for discipleship, and for us to follow Him! **This all makes perfect sense to our sin consciousness.** We know we are not good enough, we know we do not measure up, we know we are lacking, we know we have many weaknesses; **therefore, we know God is going to require something from us!**

**What We Need To Realize Is That God In Christ Jesus
Has Done It All!**

We need to remain consistent with the understanding that Jesus has saved us to the uttermost (Heb. 7:25). We need to stay focused on the fact that His grace is more than sufficient for us and is made perfect in our weakness (II Cor. 12:9). **We need to be convinced** that any effort on our part to atone or make up the difference, or pursue ***Holiness and righteousness*** based on works is missing it. **There can be no mixture of faith with works in our own effort! There can be no mixture of grace and keeping the law!**

Ro 4:14 **For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect,**

Gal. 2:16 **"knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; **for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.**"**

When it comes to grace and faith **it is what God has done** for us in Jesus completely, perfectly, establishing **us** in ***holiness and in righteousness***:

Ro 3:21 **But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed,** being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

Ro 3:22 **even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.**

Ro 5:17 For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of **the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.**)

Ro 5:19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, **so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.**

Ro 10:4 For **Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.**

Since we are under grace how do we operate in ***holiness and righteousness?*** We operate in ***holiness and righteousness*** as Abraham did!

Ro 4:3 For what does the Scripture say? "**Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.**"

Abraham believed God! Since by works of the flesh, or by keeping the law, no one is justified, then **righteousness was unavailable to all!** But now **righteousness has been revealed apart from the law (Rom. 3:21)!** This righteousness *is a gift* given through the blood atonement of Jesus Christ. This righteousness does not come to us before we are saved or after, by any works of our own. This righteousness was a gift in Jesus Christ and **becomes ours by grace through faith when we are born again.**

We are made righteous by the salvation of our soul in Jesus. We receive it as a gift; we accept it by faith in what was done on our behalf. Jesus, through no act, thought, or word of His own, was made sin on our behalf on the cross so that we through no act, thought, or word of our own are made righteous! ***It is a trade!*** He dies and pays a debt we could not pay taking upon Himself ALL judgment against sin; in turn by being raised from the dead becomes the ***first fruits of righteousness*** in us! Jesus in us the mystery of the gospel means we died to the flesh and live to Him (Col. 1:27):

1Co 1:30 But of Him ***you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us*** wisdom from God—and **righteousness and sanctification** and redemption—

Sanctification means holiness is made unto us. We need to be convinced that in Christ **we are** holy and righteous altogether in our spirit—our born again new creation spirit! **It matters what we believe because we will act accordingly.**

Take the example of patience I presented before, if we believe that patience is something outside of us, something God is requiring of us, something we must make an effort to achieve, develop or build in us, we are going to be frustrated. Some might even believe that they have developed better patience (in comparison to others) and take credit for it as a part of their character. They will have something to boast about before others; yet, whose patience is perfect enough to stand before God? However, if we understand that patience is a ***fruit of the Spirit*** and when we were born again we received the Holy Spirit, then we are going to ***accept, acknowledge, and receive*** that patience is already in us—because it was given to us.

Instead of us constantly striving ***for*** something we believe is outside of us, or needs to improve more and more within us, we can begin to fight the good fight of faith believing we ***already have*** all the patience of God! Instead of striving ***for*** patience we begin to strive **with our patience** from God.

2Pe 1:3 “as His divine power **has given** to us ***all things that pertain to life and godliness***, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,

The first position is under the law always striving for something we do not have yet; the second position is under grace recognizing all the good things that are in us through Jesus Christ our Lord (Philemon 1:6). We will always be frustrated, feeling undone, restless, striving, and falling short; that is the result of us being under the law—we can't beat the law! Under grace ***we can rest*** while knowing by faith that we've been given all things that pertain to life and GODLINESS! **We rest yet we labor to overcome the flesh to accept our righteousness of the Lord.**

What We Believe Establishes How We Will Live.

Some argue that since we claim to be under grace then we do not need to strive to be holy or righteous at all. We can do whatever we want because we are under grace! This assumes that unless we strive for it, work for it, there is no other way for God's holiness and righteousness to manifest in our lives. When we were born again how many of us strived for it, worked for it, justified our earning of it? Didn't we become born again by grace through faith? We didn't work for it we accepted, acknowledged, and received it. We became born again as a gift not by any works of our own or somehow keeping part of the law. We simply accepted what Jesus did for us and found grace and peace in the forgiveness of sins. Then we began to act accordingly, like someone who is saved. When we believe right, that is that in Christ we are Holy and Righteous, then we'll begin to act like it.

Holiness and righteousness have come the same way by grace through faith. It came with Jesus when the Spirit of Christ came into our lives. We accept it as a gift. We can't earn holiness

or righteousness we can only believe that in Christ we are the righteousness of God!

Php 3:9 “and be found in Him, **not having my own righteousness, which is from the law**, but ***that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith***;

How Does Holiness And Righteousness Manifest In Our Lives?

When we are under the law we experience a burden, guilt, condemnation, a sense of always being under examination, and always falling short. Even if we do better than most we are not able to reach perfection, or hit the mark of God’s glory. All of the law was intended to expose sin and show what sin is. The law reveals that we do not have the love of God in us! The law was never able to bring about holiness or righteousness or show forth the love of God in us; the result of this was to expose our need:

Heb 7:19 “for the law made nothing perfect;

The law demands obedience, conformity, and perfection; it is the standard of purity and holiness. We however have no hope of keeping the law and under its dominion will always be found guilty. The law brings about judgment, condemnation and death; the actual reason for this predicament is that in our natural man status we do not have the *love of God in us!*

God finding the law unable to cleanse or make anyone perfect, or produce the love of God in them, found the situation untenable.

Ro 8:3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,

The law was weak because of the flesh or sin nature; therefore God accomplished reconciliation through His son. God made us righteous and Holy through His Son! The core change however is the presence of God's love in Christ in us! To receive God's love requires faith not the keeping of the law...The law is of the flesh and not of faith !

Ga 3:12 Yet the law is not of faith, but "the man who does them shall live by them."

No one can live before God by keeping the law therefore God made it by faith that we could receive and be justified in His presence.

Ga 3:11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "**the just shall live by faith.**"

Our life in Christ including Holiness and Righteousness is according to grace through faith...otherwise no one would make it! The change is that God's love has been given to us and the love of God makes us acceptable, included, and Holy!

Ro 4:16 Therefore *it is* of faith that *it might be* according to grace, **so that the promise might be sure to all the seed**, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all

Salvation is a gift given to us through the blood so also is everything that pertains to godliness as this scripture testifies:

Col 2:6 As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,

For us to experience salvation we received it by faith. When we let go of all of our efforts to save our self; when we surrendered all that we were; when we accepted our salvation by faith, then we were born again. Likewise ***when we let go of trying to be holy and trying to be righteous*** and just accept it, then we'll begin to experience the grace to overcome our flesh. We'll begin to recognize and experience God's love.

We Are Now Under Love

The old law is done away with. It was made obsolete, finished, no more our tutor or guardian...the law only has claim upon the old man, the flesh. We have been discharged from it, we have died to it, we are to consider it fulfilled in Christ, we are no longer under its dominion—we are under grace! We are under Love!

Heb 8:13 In that He says, "A new *covenant*," **He has made the first obsolete**. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

Ro 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, **for you are not under law** but under grace.

The first must be removed so that the second can have dominion. We must first denounce and deny the claims of the law having been redeemed from it through Christ. We must first stop responding as if we are still under the law trying to make ourselves holy by determining to live according to holy standards and regulations.

Ro 7:6 **But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by**, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not *in* the oldness of the letter.

Just as a woman is delivered or discharged from her husband when he dies, so are we delivered from the law by faith in Christ. It's not that the law ceases to exist in this world, but it has no more claims against us if we believe!

Now that the law is satisfied and fulfilled in Christ Jesus then what is left? Faith is left to accept what God has done in Christ and **act in agreement with it**. For it is impossible to please God without faith because only through faith can we be set free from the law. By living to the Lord in faith we access the grace of God. Jesus intercedes to make us hit the mark. God's grace is sufficient for us to become perfect by adding to what was lacking or weak, His perfection. The Lord made a way where there was no way through the cross. We have passed from children of darkness to children of His love!

We are to forget the past, forgive ourselves, accept Jesus' atonement always, and believe He has made us perfect in our born again spirit. We are holy and righteous by grace because of what He's done. Because we believe what He's done we stop recriminating ourselves, we stop feeling rejected, feeling unloved, feeling condemned, feeling guilty...we do this because it brings honor to our Savior. We stop allowing the law to have anything against us because in faith, in the Spirit it doesn't!

Ga 3:13 **Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law...**

The law demands and requires; however under grace God supplies! **God's love has been shed aboard in our hearts** therefore we have His presence, power, and glory dwelling in us (Rom. 5:5).

Ro 8:11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead **dwells in you**, He who raised Christ from the dead will also ***give life to your mortal bodies*** through His Spirit who **dwells in you**.

It is living to this new life within us, the same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead, which gives life to our mortal bodies overcoming all things. For I can do all things through Christ Jesus who strengthens me...because He is in me and has become my life!

Ga 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.

Ga 5:24 And those *who are Christ's* have **crucified the flesh with** its passions and desires.

It is a Spirit thing, a Spirit revelation, and a Spirit led life...**it is a love thing!**

Php 2:13 "for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for **His good pleasure**.

It is God's Spirit in us (because we acknowledge His completed work in us) **that by faith moves within us to will and to do as His good pleasure**. God's Spirit provides the will and the pleasure or power to do it. God's grace is sufficient to add to our weakness whatever is needed to make us perfect before Him. We

live by faith! We live believing the right things, that is God has already made us Holy and righteous. Because we believe the right things we will begin to experience holiness and righteousness within us ***effortlessly*** because it is His work being manifest. As we open up to God's love for us, seeing it, experiencing it; His grace empowers us, our desires to live for Him overcome. We live and abide in His love for us and nothing is impossible to us...we become filled **with the Spirit of His love!**

Conclusion

It is the Father that does the works in me because I believe Jesus is in me. I believe He has made me holy and righteous despite what I may do, say, or think. ***I realize that is my old man, the flesh, I repent and consider it settled and done.*** I sense the joy of the Lord because I believe His work is done in me. I am His workmanship prepared for good works. I see grace, I see Jesus, I see myself holy in Him, righteous in Him and the ***gift of no condemnation*** has set me free **to live to the Lord!**

God demonstrates His love towards us that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. In dying for us He gave us new life, a new spirit, we live in grace, and as we acknowledge these things and act upon them, we are experiencing the demonstration of His love!

Ro 5:8 **But God demonstrates His own love toward us,** in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

God continually demonstrates His love towards us, in us, and through us, ***as we acknowledge all that He has done for us in Christ Jesus. He continually demonstrates*** His love for us through ***our***

intercessor coming inside of us to help us. He makes up the difference so that we always hit the mark of God's calling—His grace is sufficient for us always.