

## “YET NOT I”

This morning I'd like to talk about something that has been truth since the time sin entered this world. But it's a truth that has been lost and found many times through the centuries and it's the very message we've been called to proclaim in these last days. It's a very simple truth, but one that has been perverted, mocked, added to, taken away from, and purposely obscured by our great adversary; and over the years since creation, many well-known Bible characters have grasped the meaning of it. Adam and Eve understood it; Noah understood it; Abraham understood it; the 12 disciples were slow learners, but they finally comprehended it; the apostle Paul wrote most extensively about it; the Protestant Reformers were persecuted and martyred over it, and the meaning of it is what many Seventh-day Adventist leaders rejected over 100 years ago. And of course, this most important truth is justification by faith, or righteousness by faith.

The words “just, justified, justification, righteous, and righteousness” in the KJV all have nearly the same meaning in Hebrew and Greek, and many times exactly the same meaning. For instance, where the Hebrew and Greek use the same word each time, Bible translators used two or three different English words interchangeably to describe that same word. For example: when the apostle Paul said, “the just shall live by faith” in **Romans 1:17**, it could just as well be translated “the righteous shall live by faith.” And even the word “faith” in the Greek has been interchangeably used with the English words “believe”, “trust”, and “hope”, and choosing which word they felt best described the situation is what Bible translators have done. And so, it really doesn't matter if you call it righteousness by faith, or justification by faith, because you can't be justified without becoming righteous at the same time. However, and I'll explain this in a few minutes, the term righteousness by faith is not completely defined by the term justification by faith alone. There's something else needed to make righteousness by faith complete.

Now, the Bible makes no provision for future sinning beforehand, does it? Every true Protestant knows this. The Bible doesn't teach that you can purchase an indulgence and purposely go out and sin and think that's OK with God, that's a Catholic fabrication. And so, justification only deals with past sins, and that's why only past sins can be forgiven.

Let's just read that in **Romans 3:23-26**, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified (**or declared righteous**) freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (**or an atoning sacrifice**) through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are (**what?**) past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”

Isn't that a wonderful truth to understand and experience? And isn't that something the world needs to know? Salvation is not complicated, if it was, then people might have an excuse as to why they didn't understand and obey. The reason salvation seems complicated or confusing is because religious leaders have made it so. If a person would just read and study for themselves and be

willing to do and believe what the Bible says, they would know of the doctrine, whether it's true or false.

In fact, that's what Jesus said in **John 7:17**, He said, "If any man will do his will (**the revealed will of the Father**), he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." And so, the people who are fooled by false doctrine are those who are not obeying what they already know to be God's will. In other words, if a person knows what God's will is, even in a limited way, and they choose not to obey, then they will be fooled by false teachers. It's just that simple. Also, in **Acts 5:32** it says the Holy Spirit is given to those who obey God, and since the Bible is inspired by the Holy Spirit, we need to obey to rightly interpret the Spirit's meaning.

Now let's define justification from the Spirit of Prophecy. ***Our High Calling, page 51*** says, "Pardon and justification are one and the same thing." That's about as simple as it gets, isn't it? It continues by saying, "Through faith, the believer passes from the position of a rebel, a child of sin and Satan, to a position of a loyal subject of Christ Jesus, not because of an inherent goodness, but because Christ receives him as His child by adoption. The sinner receives the forgiveness of his sins, because these sins are borne by his Substitute and Surety. The Lord speaks to His heavenly Father, saying: 'This is My child. I relieve him from the condemnation of death, giving him My insurance policy—eternal life—because I have taken his place and have suffered for his sins. He is even My beloved son.' Thus man, pardoned, and clothed with the beautiful garments of Christ's righteousness, stands faultless before God." Notice, we stand "faultless" before God!

If a person experiences what we just read today, then they are complete in Christ today, even though they must continue to grow in grace. And the reason they can be complete in Christ today, is because they can't improve on "faultless."

Turn with me as the apostle Paul speaks of this great truth in **Colossians 2:9, 10**. "For in him (**Christ**) dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." The word "complete" here means: "To cram, or to fill up." If you have a glass of water that is full to the brim, and because of hydrostatic pressure is even a little domed on the top, is there any room for even one more drop? NO! That's how complete we are when we are justified by faith. But how about if we add just one more drop of good works to that glass of Christ's righteousness, will it be any fuller? No! If you put even one drop of good works in there, thinking that you can make it fuller or more complete, you'll spoil the fullness of it, because the contents will dribble down the side of the glass. And if you do that, you will end up like the foolish Galatians who were fooled by "another gospel." Not only does justification by faith make us "faultless before God", but we're told we must stay full the same way we got full.

Go back to **verse 6 in Colossians chapter 2**. Here Paul says, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, (**through faith**) so walk ye in him." To walk in Him means to follow Him by faith and live as He lived. The walking doesn't make us complete; it just shows that we are complete. And there's a big, big difference between the two. In fact, the difference is so big that the difference

means eternal life or eternal death! We walk with God because we are complete, not to become complete, and we should never forget that.

Now listen to this, because here's where people get confused. In *The Desire of Ages, page 555* it says, "Sanctification is holiness, and holiness is wholeness for God." Now here's the important point, and we'll talk more about this in a few minutes. Sanctification, or holiness is what enables us to retain our justification, or our right standing before God. When we are pardoned we are holy in God's eyes, because the Father sees the perfect life of His Son rather than our past sins, but if we want to remain holy in His eyes, we have to make a conscious choice to continue to belong wholly, or completely to God. Does that make sense? And where does holiness come from, from within ourselves? NO! It comes from God, and it is given to us freely as we exercise faith in the gift. And so, both justification and sanctification come by faith, and both are necessary to become righteous and to remain righteous, and this is what righteousness by faith is all about.

Now let me show you from the Bible that sanctification, or holiness, is by faith the same as justification is by faith. Turn to **Acts 26:15-18**. This is Paul's experience on the road to Damascus when Jesus revealed Himself to him. He writes, "And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins (**justification or pardon**), and inheritance among them which are sanctified (**or made holy**), (**how?**) by faith that is in me."

We've got to realize friends, that just as we can do nothing to deserve pardon, neither can we do anything to deserve holiness, or manufacture holiness. We receive them both from God by faith. And genuine faith always translates into righteous deeds, or good works. If we are connected to the vine, we will produce the fruit that the vine mandates we produce, it can't be any other way. Just as an apple tree cannot bear oranges, so holiness cannot bear evil fruit. But even though we can do nothing to deserve salvation, it doesn't mean that we should do nothing, but it has to be in the proper order, and the apostle Paul, who was a champion of righteousness by faith, tells us what the proper order is in **Ephesians 2:8-10**. Notice the proper order here. "For by grace (**the free unmerited love and favor of God**) "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. (**Now listen carefully**) For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

And so, very clearly here; a new creation comes before good works are performed, and good works cannot be maintained unless we continue to be His workmanship by walking in them. It's God who made us what we are! In our union with Christ, we were created for a life of good deeds, which He prepared beforehand for us to do. Let me read you a couple more inspired statement about this and then we'll look at faith for a few minutes.

**Review and Herald, September 3, 1889.** This is in the context of the plan of salvation, specifically justification by faith. “There is not one in one hundred who understands for himself the Bible truth on this subject that is so necessary to our present and eternal welfare. . . The thought that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us (**or credited to our delinquent account, that’s what justification by faith does**), not because of any merit on our part, but as a free gift from God, seemed a precious thought. . . The enemy of man and God is not willing that this truth should be clearly presented; for he knows that if the people receive it fully, his power will be broken.”

Are you one of the one in one hundred who understands this truth for yourself? If not, that’s the reason you’re not having victory over sin. If you want the power of the enemy broken in your life, then it’s essential that you understand justification by faith and fully receive it. The reason we’ve been commissioned to give the third angel’s message is because it is justification by faith in verity, we’re told in **Evangelism, page 190**. In other words, there is no other truth that is more important than this truth, and we are not to allow anything else to absorb our attention, we’re told again in **Testimonies for the Church, volume 9, page 19**. The third angel’s message is the last message of mercy this world will ever hear, and if we haven’t experience it, how can we give it?

This next quote is a little lengthy, but well worth the reading. I’ll be reading excerpts from **Faith and Works, pages 18-27**, “The danger has been presented to me again and again of entertaining, as a people, false ideas of justification by faith. I have been shown for years that Satan would work in a special manner to confuse the mind on this point. The law of God has been largely dwelt upon and has been presented to congregations, almost as destitute of the knowledge of Jesus Christ and His relation to the law as was the offering of Cain. I have been shown that many have been kept from the faith because of the mixed, confused ideas of salvation, because the ministers have worked in a wrong manner to reach hearts. The point that has been urged upon my mind for years is the imputed righteousness of Christ (**or justification**). . . There is not a point that needs to be dwelt upon more earnestly, repeated more frequently, or established more firmly in the minds of all than the impossibility of fallen man meriting anything by his own best good works. Salvation is through faith in Jesus Christ alone. . . Let the subject be made distinct and plain that it is not possible to effect anything in our standing before God or in the gift of God to us through creature merit. Should faith and works purchase the gift of salvation for anyone, then the Creator is under obligation to the creature. Here is an opportunity for falsehood to be accepted as truth. If any man can merit salvation by anything he may do, then he is in the same position as the Catholic to do penance for his sins. Salvation, then, is partly of debt, that may be earned as wages. If man cannot, by any of his good works, merit salvation, then it must be wholly of grace, received by man as a sinner because he receives and believes in Jesus. It is wholly a free gift. Justification by faith is placed beyond controversy. And all this controversy is ended, as soon as the matter is settled that the merits of fallen man in his good works can never procure eternal life for him. . . No work of man can merit for him the pardoning love of God, but the love of God pervading the soul will lead him to do those things which were always required of God and that he should do with pleasure. . . Discussions may be entered into by mortals strenuously advocating creature merit, and each man striving for the supremacy, but they simply do not know that all the time, in principle and

character, they are misrepresenting the truth as it is in Jesus. They are in a fog of bewilderment. They need the divine love of God which is represented by gold tried in the fire; they need the white raiment of Christ's pure character; and they need the heavenly eyesalve that they might discern with astonishment the utter worthlessness of creature merit to earn the wages of eternal life. I ask, How can I present this matter as it is? The Lord Jesus imparts all the powers, all the grace, all the penitence, all the inclination, all the pardon of sins, in presenting His righteousness for man to grasp by living faith—which is also the gift of God. If you would gather together everything that is good and holy and noble and lovely in man and then present the subject to the angels of God as acting a part in the salvation of the human soul or in merit, the proposition would be rejected as treason. Christ for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. And any works that man can render to God will be far less than nothingness. . . The idea of doing anything to merit the grace of pardon is fallacy from beginning to end. . . There is danger in regarding justification by faith as placing merit on faith. When you take the righteousness of Christ as a free gift you are justified freely through the redemption of Christ. . . 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. . . many are struggling in their own finite strength to win salvation by good works. 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. . . Here is truth that will unfold the subject to your mind if you do not close it to the rays of light. Eternal life is an infinite gift. This places it outside the possibility of our earning it, because it is infinite. . . It is the bewitching power of Satan that leads men to look to themselves in the place of looking to Jesus."

Now let's take a moment to define faith from the Bible since it's an integral part of being declared righteous. The classic definition of course is found in **Hebrews 11:1** where Paul writes, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." If I were to put it in my own words I would say, "Faith is the confident assurance that something we want is going to happen. It's the certainty that what we hope for is waiting for us, even though we can't see it up ahead." Other people have said, "Faith is like radar that sees through the fog" or "Faith is putting all your eggs in God's basket, then counting your blessings before they hatch" or "Faith is the bird that sings when the dawn is still dark."

We've read several statements and Bible texts this morning that make it crystal clear that there is nothing we can do to earn salvation, or that we can add anything to the imputed righteousness of Christ to make it more complete, but is there more to salvation than simply believing that we are justified by faith?

As wonderful as justification by faith is, it's only the first half of the gospel, there's also a second half. Justification by faith is believed and taught by nearly all churches and all denominations today, but that's as far as most of them go. However, no one can be saved in God's everlasting Kingdom by believing only half a gospel unless they die right afterward like the thief on the cross, but that rarely happens. Most of us live on for years after receiving Christ, and as we do, we need to remain

justified, because we lose it when we sin. This is something the majority of Christian don't understand, and it's because their preachers don't understand, or they simply ignore it.

Remember; justification or pardon only covers past sins, but most Christians, and sadly many Seventh-day Adventists today, believe the blood of Jesus still covers them even while they are sinning knowingly. This is what has been termed the "new theology" and people who believe that are the 99 out of one hundred rather than the one in one hundred who understand for themselves what justification by faith means. This new theology is the omega apostasy Sister White said would develop in the church, and it's here, and it has been for 60 or 70 years at least. No wonder, when God showed her this, that she said she trembled for our people.

When you think about it, many Adventists who are 60 to 70 years old have never heard the truth, because this false teaching has been around for that long. Sabbath after Sabbath for all their lives many have been lied to. And if that's the case, what hope is there for those who are younger than 60 or 70 years old who have never read the testimonies or any of the books of the conflict series, and who's study goes no deeper than the Sabbath School quarterly? If that! We not only have a work to do for the world, but unfortunately we have a work to do for those who are Adventists in name only.

And so, there's more to salvation than being declared righteous when we are forgiven our past sins, we also need the second half of the gospel, which is every bit as important as the first, and that is, being made righteous after being declared righteous. The other half of the gospel is sanctification by faith. And the reason I want to talk about it is because it's really easy to claim more for justification than we should, and if not presented properly it's easy to give the impression that we have nothing to do to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling as Paul says in **Philippians 2:12**.

Whenever we think about righteousness by faith in the Advent movement, we think mostly of what A. T. Jones preached back in the late 1800's, don't we? But A. T. Jones made a mistake back then by placing too much emphasis upon the first half of the gospel and giving the impression that there was no second half, and the Lord's messenger had to write him a letter and warn him to be careful, and I'd like to read you a portion of that letter this morning.

This is from ***Selected Messages, book 1, pages 377, 378***. She writes, "Brother A. T. Jones, I was attending a meeting, and a large congregation were present. In my dream you were presenting the subject of faith and the imputed righteousness of Christ by faith (**or justification by faith**). You repeated several times that works amounted to nothing, that there were no conditions. The matter was presented in that light that I knew minds would be confused, and would not receive the correct impression in reference to faith and works, and I decided to write to you. You state this matter too strongly. There are conditions to our receiving justification and sanctification, and the righteousness of Christ. I know your meaning, but you leave a wrong impression upon many minds. While good works will not save even one soul, yet it is impossible for even one soul to be saved without good works. God saves us under a law, that we must ask if we would receive, seek if we

would find, and knock if we would have the door opened unto us. Christ offers Himself as willing to save unto the uttermost all who come unto him. He invites all to come to Him. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." You look in reality upon these subjects as I do, yet you make these subjects, through your expressions, confusing to minds. And after you have expressed your mind radically in regard to works, when questions are asked you upon this very subject it is not laying out in so very clear lines in your own mind that you cannot define the correct principles to other minds, and you are yourself unable to make your statements harmonize with your own principles and faith."

Now, before we go any further, I think it would be good for us to define the terms justification and sanctification in more detail. The Spirit of Prophecy tells us that when a sermon is presented it should speak to the simplest person in the room, and I always figure that's me. So, if I can figure out something and understand it, you should be able to as well.

We read earlier that Justification is just a big word for pardon or forgiveness. But that quote from ***Our High Calling, page 51*** goes on to say that "Justification is the opposite of condemnation." That's why the apostle Paul says what he does in **Romans 8:1** where it says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, **(or those who are justified. But please notice the rest of the verse)** who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Not only are those who are in Christ no longer under condemnation, but to remain free from condemnation, we must walk after the Spirit and not the flesh, and that takes more than justification accomplishes.

Walking implies something we do if we are in Christ Jesus, doesn't it? If you go to the concordance, which is basically a Hebrew and Greek dictionary, you'll find that justification means: "To regard as innocent," or "Acquittal for Christ's sake." When we are justified by faith an exchange takes place. We give God our sins and He gives us His righteousness. Pretty good exchange, isn't it? If you go to Webster's dictionary you'll find that justification means, "To release from the guilt of sin and to accept as righteous", or "To show a sufficient lawful reason for an act done." The reason we can be released from the penalty of sin is because of the lawful act accomplished 2000 years ago on a hill called Calvary, where innocent blood was shed in our behalf. It's a lawful act because One who was equal with the broken 10-commandment law, and who never broke it, has taken our place. It's a done deal if you can simply believe and accept the promise of justification by faith. However, that does not mean that you cannot become unjust after the deal is done. The Bible does not teach the false doctrine of eternal security in this life. That's a very comforting lie, but one that will cause more souls to be lost than anything else I know.

Justification, or the imputed righteousness of Christ, is a transfer of credit from One who has a perfect credit history to someone who has such a bad credit history they couldn't get a loan to buy a pack of bubblegum. We need to understand that because of His perfect life, Jesus has a credit line that is sufficient to pay our debt of sin, no matter how big of a debt we've incurred! So when Satan, our creditor, comes knocking at the door for payment, the wages of which is death, we can with complete assurance and faith hand him Jesus' credit card and he will be forced to stamp our

delinquent account “Paid in full.” And so, here’s the bottom line, now that we are out of debt through the forgiving grace of God, how do we continue on debt free?

It’s probably no surprise to you that the way we continue on debt free is through the process called sanctification, the second half of the gospel. It’s a huge subject and there’s much information about it, but we can only scratch the surface today, but let’s see what we can learn. The concordance tells us that sanctification is “holiness”, and you’ll remember the quote we read in ***The Desire of Ages, page 555*** that “holiness is wholeness for God.” Once we are forgiven we say, “Thank you, Lord! I love You so much for what you have done for me that I’ll do anything you want me to do”, because your law is now written in my heart. That’s what we’re told in **Psalm 40:8**, and when it’s written there, it won’t be so hard to keep it. Power to resist will be given when loving obedience is truly our heart’s desire.

The dictionary tells us that holiness is “purity of character”, and doesn’t the development of character take place from the time we’re born until we die? Yes! ***Christ’s Object Lessons, page 65*** says sanctification or holiness is the work of lifetime. Not a lifetime of trying to get rid of sin, justification does that, but a lifetime of power to live the life of Christ. Because Christ lives within, unlike forgiveness, which only takes a moment, holiness is progressive. Justification includes forgiveness of sins and the new birth experience and that’s as far as it goes, then sanctification takes over, which is a transmission of power so we can live without continuing to sin, and isn’t that important? Again, through the process of sanctification we retain our justification. Since pardon doesn’t cover current or future sinning, only past sins, then we need something else to give us power to resist temptation, and that’s sanctification by faith.

Notice what it says in **Hebrews 6:1**. Paul says, “Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ (**that would be justification, or the first lessons we learn from the gospel**), let us go on unto perfection (**or sanctification or holiness**); not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God.” And so, as important as justification is, there’s something more that is necessary to keep us from falling; there’s perfection of character, and that happens as we avail ourselves, by faith, of the process of sanctification.

Something that helps me to keep these two terms straight in my mind is that Justification is performed by Christ for the sinner, that’s our title to heaven, and sanctification is performed by Christ for the saint, which is our fitness for heaven, and both are necessary if we would be ready to meet Jesus when He comes.

Let’s just read about that in ***The Faith I live by, page 116***, “The righteousness by which we are justified is imputed; the righteousness by which we are sanctified is imparted. The first (**or we could say, the first half of the gospel**) is our title to heaven, the second is our fitness for heaven. . . As the penitent sinner, contrite before God, discerns Christ’s atonement in his behalf, and accepts this atonement as his only hope in this life and the future life, his sins are pardoned. This is justification by faith. Sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, a day, but of a lifetime. It



is not gained by a happy flight of feeling, but is the result of constantly dying to sin, and constantly living for Christ.”

Now let me ask you a question. Are you a saint or a sinner? I’d like you to think about that for a minute before you answer. We covered this subject some years ago, but let me refresh your memory, because it’s important for us to understand.

In the New Testament the word “holy” and “saint” are the same in the Greek, and it means to be “physically pure, morally blameless, and ceremonially consecrated.” Doesn’t this fit the definition of Christ to a tee, and if we are dead to the old man of sin and Christ lives within, then that definition will fit us as well. A sinner on the other hand is quite the opposite, because the suffix “er” on the end of the word means you’re engaged in sin, and if you’re engaged in sin, you are in a lost condition and must ask for pardon again in order to be justified. So we must be saints to be saved!

In *Testimonies to Ministers, page 87* it says, “The eternal God has drawn the line of distinction between the saints and the sinners, the converted and the unconverted. The two classes do not blend into each other imperceptibly, like the colors of the rainbow. They are as distinct as midday and midnight.” Also in *Manuscript releases, page 350* it says, “No one can occupy middle ground. Men and women are either saints or sinners, either entitled to a glorious life of eternity, or doomed to eternal death.” And one more in *Signs of The Times, August 22, 1900*, “. . . the sinner must freely surrender his own will to God, and accept Christ as his substitute and surety (**justification**). He must rely upon Him as the only one who can change a sinner to a saint.” So, the moment you accept Christ as your substitute and surety, you become a saint, that’s clear! But how to remain one is the question.

There’s a big misunderstanding about this in the Christian world at large and even within Adventism today. It’s certainly true that without Christ we are all sinners, but at the same time, Jesus is not going to take even one sinner to heaven with Him when He comes, correct? So, at what point are we going to stop? The devil would like us to sin until our probation closes, which will fix our destiny for eternal death, but through sanctification God makes it possible for us to stop now, because once the work of Jesus is finished in the Most Holy place, it’s too late to take advantage of sanctification by faith. Have you ever noticed that the third angel’s message is a reference to what saints do? They keep God’s commandments and are identified as holy ones for so doing. And so, obedience and sanctification go together, don’t they?

Let’s look at just one more Bible text about saints and sinners and then we’ll have to move on. Turn with me to **Romans 1:7**, I want you to see this one for yourself. “To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called *to be* (**what?**) saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

You’ll notice, if you are reading the KJV, the words “*to be*” are italicized, which means they were added by the translators and weren’t in the Greek manuscripts, and the translators could very well

have placed them there because they believed, like most Christian today, that they will be saints, or will be holy when they get to heaven, and it true, they will be if they get to heaven, but God wants us to be saints now, today! In fact, if we don't become saints in this life, we won't be in heaven to begin with. But here's the point, if these two words are not added to the Bible it conveys a much different thought, because we are not called to be saints sometime in the future, we are called to be saints today, and we are if Jesus lives within. Most of the time there's not a problem with these italicized words, in fact there helpful most of the time, but once in a while they can convey a wrong thought which can lead our minds in a wrong direction. Notice also that the text is addressed to "the beloved of God", and you have to be a saint already in order to have that designation.

In *The Great Controversy, pages 471, 472* we're told, "The sanctification now gaining prominence in the religious world carries with it a spirit of self-exaltation and a disregard for the law of God that mark it as foreign to the religion of the Bible. Its advocates teach that sanctification is an instantaneous work, by which, through faith alone, they attain to perfect holiness. "Only believe," say they, "and the blessing is yours." No further effort on the part of the receiver is supposed to be required. . . But is it possible for men to be holy, in accord with the will and character of God, without coming into harmony with the principles which are an expression of His nature and will, and which show what is well pleasing to Him? The desire for an easy religion that requires no striving, no self-denial, no divorce from the follies of the world, has made the doctrine of faith, and faith only, a popular doctrine."

I hate to tell you this friends, but none of us are going to slide into heaven without a struggle. As long as we have a sinful human nature, self will always vie for the mastery. Isn't it a law of the mind that by beholding we become changed? If we want to be changed into the likeness of Christ, we have to behold Him! We must do like the Israelites were counseled to do in **Deuteronomy 6:3-9**. Let's take a moment to read that.

"Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey. **(For us that's the heavenly Canaan)** Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates." This is the kind of dedication we must have if we would arrive safely on the heavenly shore.

We already read from inspiration that both justification and sanctification come by faith. Firstly, a faith that God will forgive our past sins, and secondly faith to believe that He will give power to keep us from falling back into sin. Sanctification, or the imparted righteousness of Christ, is simply a

transmission of power, as I mentioned earlier, and has absolutely nothing to do with pardon at all. And so, in order to remain in a forgiven state, we need the imparted righteousness of Christ.

In the gospel of **John 15:4, 5** Jesus said, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." As we read these inspired words, you may have noticed that whether or not we abide in Christ makes all the difference. In fact, it's the difference of being a saint or a sinner, the difference between being holy or unholy, the difference between being converted or unconverted.

Have you ever noticed how the Bible attaches the word "holy" to many different things? First of all, there is the "Holy Father", and Jesus Himself is called "that Holy thing." There's the Holy Spirit, Holy angels, Holy city, Holy prophets and apostles, Holy and most holy places, Holy ground, Holy scriptures, Holy law, Holy brethren, Holy faith, Holy Sabbath day, Holy convocation, Holy water, Holy oil, and Holy covenant. In fact, everything connected with the sanctuary is holy. God's name is holy. And last but not least, we are to be saints, because we are also to be holy.

Now let me ask you another question: what makes a person, place, or thing holy? It's God's presence, isn't it? We must abide in Christ through justification, and Christ must abide in us through sanctification. We must experience the whole truth, because half of a truth is just not good enough.

Turn with me please to **John 17:17-19**. As Jesus was praying to His Father He said, "Sanctify them (**My disciples**) through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

Holiness then, must come by knowing the truth as it's found in God's word, and Jesus said, "I am the truth," didn't He? So sanctification comes by knowing Jesus, and God will never sanctify us without our permission. We must choose for Christ to do it, because we can't do it ourselves.

Notice what it says in **1 Thessalonians 5:23, 24**, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." Do what? Make you holy!

Yes, Jesus will do it, but does that somehow negate our own will? In the ***Pacific Union Recorder, February 16, 1905***, it says, "Under the supervision of divine power (**sanctification**), the will is to become strong, prompt, and firm. If we will consent, God can and will so identify us with Himself, so mold our thoughts and aims, that when obeying His will, we are only carrying out the impulse of our own minds. Then we shall not desire to carry out unchristian desires; we shall be filled with an earnest determination to do the will of God. We shall not try to work in our own strength, and we shall guard strictly against self-exaltation."

Self-exaltation, by the way, is why we are never to say, "I am holy." Have you ever read that? I think at this point we should read that, because I don't want anyone to get the wrong idea about what I'm saying. It's found in *Selected Messages, book 3, pages 354, 355* where she says, "I want to say to whomsoever the glory of God has been revealed, "You will never have the least inclination to say, 'I am holy, I am sanctified.'" After my first vision of glory, I could not discern the brightest light. It was thought that my eyesight was gone, but when I again became accustomed to the things of this world I could see again. This is why I tell you never to boast, saying, "I am holy, I am sanctified," for it is the surest evidence that you know not the Scripture or the power of God. Let God write it in His books if He will, but you should never utter it. I have never dared to say, "I am holy, I am sinless," but whatever I have thought was the will of God I have tried to do it with all my heart, and I have the sweet peace of God in my soul."

"Let God write it in His books if He will, but you should never utter it." So, if we must be holy to go to heaven, as we already discovered, then why are we not to say, "I am holy?" It's because dear friends, I am not holy. Without Christ I am a sinner, because without Christ I will engage in sin. If someone says, "I am holy" it's because self is still alive, self is still on the heart's throne, because dead people can't talk. If self is dead, how can self say, "I am holy?" It's not possible! However, what we can say as new creatures that have been raised to newness of life in Christ Jesus is, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and 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."

This short verse in **Galatians 2:20** is the true and balanced view of justification and sanctification; of righteousness by faith; of the whole gospel, and I want God to be able to write in His book that Christ lives in me, and I in Him, how about you? I want Him to be able to write, Jack is holy, because Jack has died on the cross with my Son, and as a result, my Son now lives in him. Yes, Jack still lives in fallen flesh, but now he lives by the faith of Jesus who loved him, and gave Himself for him. May it be so in my life and in yours.