

The Breastplate of Righteousness

I. ACCEPTING HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Romans 3:21-24

Our Lord is a Holy God who cannot tolerate sin, yet He loves the sinner. Only by His mercy, grace and righteousness can we enjoy the greatest gift of all - life in His Holy dwelling place and the peace of His constant presence.

To believe in Him for righteousness has three parts:

1. PAST - God declares his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past. (Romans 3:25)
2. PRESENT - He lives in us moment by moment to express His righteousness through us in every circumstance, (John 15:1-8).
3. FUTURE - there is laid up for us the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to us on that day - that wonderful day when we will meet Him face-to-face and be fully transformed into His likeness (2 Timothy 4:8).

Until that great day, we must wear our breastplate of righteousness, affirming with our minds and will, what we know in our heart about our Lord and King. We must count on His spotless life covering us through every challenging circumstance. He then guards our heart from Satan's painful accusations of failure and worthlessness.

II. Practicing RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 2 Corinthians 5:17

God tells us that we became a new person, holy and beautiful in Him, the moment we believed and received His life. But doubt will prevent us from wearing His beauty and purity from day to day. Our failure's will not keep His love from flowing toward us, but disobedience will hinder the flow of His love in and through us.

Therefore, God has planned a way to build faith and obedience in us. This life-long process is characterized by a succession of trial, failures, victories, growth, and plateaus. Notice the balance between our part and His part in this process:

Wherefore, my beloved, as ye 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 which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Philippians 2:12-13

We "work out" our salvation by faith and obedience. When we affirm the truth of His righteousness in us, it shines through our lives, in increasing measure, for the old ways no

II. Practicing RIGHTEOUSNESS. (continued)

longer fit. When we yield ourselves to Him in obedience, He takes over "to will and to work in us." There will be inner battles - we will find ourselves doing what we hate and failing to do what we should.

For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Romans 7:19

III. Wearing His RIGHTEOUSNESS.

We enter a lifestyle of righteousness the same way we put on the rest of the armor through an attitude of true worship. Jesus wills the renewing of our mind and the transformation of our spirit into His likeness - a process fed by affirmation of Scripture and the application of truth.

The four steps that help us put on truth will also clothe us in His righteousness:

1. FEED on the truth of His righteousness. [John 17:1-19](#); [2 Corinthians 6:7](#)
2. MEDITATE on His truths which renew our mind and transform our heart. [1 Timothy 4:15-16](#)
3. FILTER the truth, permitting only those thoughts that agree with truth. [Acts 17:11](#)
4. FOLLOW truth, allowing His righteous life in us to direct and empower every thought and action. [John 10:27](#); [3 John 1:11](#)

We cannot wear righteousness as our covering unless we believe and receive the truths about our new identity in Christ. When we accept and affirm Christ's righteousness He makes it a vibrant reality in our life. A marvelous transformation takes place from the inside out as we learn to think and express His truth.

Morning and evening, meditate on these affirmations of your identity in Christ. Write them on cards, carry them with you and review them often during the day. Let them open your eyes to see yourself and others through His eyes of unconditional love and acceptance.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Romans 8:1

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. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. Galatians 2:20-21

Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. Galatians 3:6-7

Righteousness then radiates outward, not in duties or rituals, but through the motivating force of God's own character in us. Now it becomes natural to consider the welfare of another above personal comfort. Imagine the protection, the strength, the triumph of such oneness. Standing together against the enemy, helping each other put on our royal clothes, interceding, encouraging, holding one another up, maintaining a clear vision of victory for one another. What a triumph!