

Righteousness

January 27, 2008

Ephesians 6:10-17

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of this wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Review

Church in Ephesus “faithful in Christ Jesus”

Understood mature teachings of “gospel”

Told to be on alert and stand firm, because of the battle

Battle here was specifically in relation to false teachers

Battle about inheritance, land

Belt of truth

Helmet of salvation

We may feel inadequate or unworthy of your “heavenly calling.” What we *feel* is immaterial. Our emotions vacillate and change daily. That is not the point. The point is that GOD is more than adequate and He is more than worthy and it is by His blood and by His cleansing and by His power that we will go on and take possession of the land. We *can* overcome because He *has* overcome.

There is a spiritual struggle that happens in those who press on toward maturity. There is prevalent deception regarding God’s truth of the coming kingdom and I hope that you are aware of Satan’s systematic and targeted attacks concerning your involvement in it. It is, as the verse states, a struggle against heavenly forces; forces of darkness that do not want Christians to understand that they have the ability to take their positions from them. Satan and his angels have done everything in their power to prevent as many saints as possible from realizing their heavenly inheritance. And, unfortunately, his tactics have worked for the most part.

So although we need to be on our guard, we can also rejoice because of the following verse—

Matthew 13:11, 16-17

¹¹ [Jesus speaking] “To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens, but to them it has not been granted. ¹⁶ But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. ¹⁷ For truly I say to you, that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it; and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.”

Righteousness

Part of the process of our study is to *unlearn* some things that may have been misunderstood in the past.

Righteousness

January 27, 2008

Let's explore the word *righteousness*. Righteousness is one of those biblical words that seem to have a bit of confusion surrounding it. It is used almost 300 times in the Bible; it's used more times than the word 'salvation' and more times than the word 'love.'

The Greek word for "righteousness" is *dikaioisune* (1343), which literally means "to conform to what is right or that which is just." The root word *dike* means a "manner or tendency." The noun *dike* carries with it the thought of judgment; it expresses the idea of an expected behavior or conformity, according to an imposed standard, with a prescribed punishment for nonconformity. REREAD

The root word/noun *dike* is only used four times in the New Testament. It is translated "judgment," "vengeance" (twice), and "punishment" (cf. Acts 25:15; Acts 28:4; Jude 1:7; and II Thess. 1:9).

The Hebrew word for "righteousness" is *tsedhaqah* (06666), which is actually a legal term that describes relationships, whereas the parties involved must be faithful to the expectations of one another. This word implies rightness, justice, and fairness.

There's another word in Scripture that is used in a similar manner as righteousness, and that word is "justification." The Greek word is *dikaiosis* (1347), which means *the act* that establishes a right or just person as such. It is the *act of*, and not the character of, justice.

The Greek word for the verb "justify" is *dikaioo* (1344), which means to either bring out the fact that a person is righteous or, if he is not righteous, to make him so. This word does not necessarily refer to *how* he is made just. It has the same root word *dike*, as above.

The words "righteousness" and "justification" are similar and connected, but they are not interchangeable. The words "just" and "righteous" however, *are* interchangeable. It's okay if this still seems a bit hazy.

So now let's look at the words from God's perspective, which really is the only perspective that matters. His justice is perfect

Psalm 19:7 The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

and His way is absolutely righteous and absolute perfection—

Psalm 18:30

As for God, His way is blameless; The word of the Lord is tried; He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him.

Anything short of perfection God does not accept; He only accepts that which is holy, for He is holy. Therefore, man must conform to God's idea of *right*. If man does not, God will not accept him. That is where the judgment comes in: acceptance and denial by God, based on His standards. Does that make sense?

We also know that man can IN NO WAY do *anything* solely by his own hand or on his own terms that would earn him the righteousness and justification needed in God's sights. God, and only God, is capable of producing holiness and perfect righteousness. So, where does that leave us? Mankind needs justification and righteousness; there is no other way to get to God. And we can't do it on our own. Anything short of God's perfect righteousness would place man in judgment by God and man would suffer loss.

Righteousness

January 27, 2008

So our questions may be: Is justification a one-time deal? Is righteousness a once-and-for-all deal? If so, then what happens to the Christians' continual sin, which we all do? Are we always seen as righteous before God if we are saved? If so, then does that mean that all the "unrighteous" ones mentioned in Scripture must be the unsaved? Since Christ is righteous and the Christian is part of His body, how can they be righteous and unrighteous at the same time? I hope you ask yourself these types of questions, because God wants us to KNOW the answers! Our running this race according to the rules depends on us knowing the answers!

Where does man's righteousness begin? As stated before, it must begin with God.

Man, in his unredeemed state, is totally and completely separated from God. He is naked, without any covering whatsoever. Adam was created in God's likeness, but fell due to sin. Since that time *all* people that have been born and that will be born are born in *Adam's* likeness (Gen. 5:3), save One—the One born to a virgin.

Unredeemed man today needs a covering in order to stand in the presence of God. And, as happened with Adam and Eve, God is the only One who can make the covering and *cover* man.

Genesis 3:21

And the Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.

Man can do nothing in this process, except of course *let* God do the work. This is man's *initial* justification.

Do you remember the events surrounding the first Passover? **Explain.**

I Corinthians 5:7b

For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.

Christ is our Passover Lamb. His blood has been shed and we appropriate it by believing in Him as the Sacrifice.

Acts 16:30-31

³⁰ ...and after he [the jailer] brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ³¹ And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household."

I Corinthians 15:3-4

³ For I [Paul] delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures...

In the same way the nation of Israel was saved out of bondage in Egypt by the Passover lambs, we are saved out of bondage to sin by the blood of THE Passover Lamb. Once the blood is appropriated, God passes over us as He sees the blood, signifying that a death has taken place. And, in judgment, a death *has* taken place. Our first birth, our natural birth, is passed over. God accepts Jesus' death in substitution for our death. Our past sins up to this point—all of them—are forgotten. *They are remembered no more!* We become a new creature to God—

II Corinthians 5:17-18

¹⁷ Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

And—

Ephesians 2:4-5,8-9

Righteousness

January 27, 2008

⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)...

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; ⁹ not as a result of works, that no one should boast.

There is nothing we can *do* to gain this salvation, other than to *believe*.

This free gift of salvation affects our *spirit*, which is just *one part* of our three-part being. The redemption of our soul and our body is dealt with subsequent to this.

It is imperative that we understand how Scripture presents the differences between our *initial* justification (a one-time deal, a salvation we presently possess) based on *Christ's* righteousness, and our *future* salvation that depends on our being justified by our present acts of faithful obedience to God's Word (this is our on-going works of righteousness throughout our present life—that which makes up the breastplate of righteousness).

Let's look at a portion of Scripture from Paul, from the letter he wrote to the Church in Rome:

Romans 5:8-9

⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.

We have been justified by Christ's blood. This is in relation to eternity—this is the free gift (**Explain death and shed blood**).

This demonstrates God's own love toward us. Isn't that what it says?

More in the same chapter—

Romans 5:14-16, 18

¹⁴ Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. ¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. ¹⁶ And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification. ¹⁸ So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men.

The transgression of the one—Adam's disobedience. The judgment that arose—death to man, all 3 parts.

Then, *on the other hand* we have the free gift. It arose from many transgressions....RESULTING IN JUSTIFICATION.

So then, through *one act* of righteousness, justification of life came to all men (all men who believe). This is the free gift. Do you see how *man's* works can't enter the picture at all in relation to the free gift? It is based on the word of ANOTHER.

Our spiritual birth is an act of the Spirit (the breath of God), completely separate from man's works. We can't *earn* it! And since we can't earn it and we do nothing to get it, WE CAN DO NOTHING TO LOSE IT!

Let's settle this issue for ourselves, for the last time. WE CANNOT LOSE THE FREE GIFT. WE CANNOT GIVE IT BACK. WE CANNOT *UNSAVE* OURSELVES IN RELATION TO LIFE FOR ETERNITY. Judgment and justification (the act of establishing one righteous [in relation to God's idea of righteous, holy]), **in relation to eternal security**, has taken place the moment that one puts faith in the shed blood of God's Perfect Provision. *It is impossible to undo that which God has done.*

Righteousness

January 27, 2008

Thus, *justification by faith* is based entirely upon Christ's righteous, justifying act — His finished work at Calvary. And it is this justification, us being made righteous through Christ through faith that places us in the family of God and gives us life for eternity.

When we are spiritually born, *by [God's] grace through [our] faith [belief]*, God places on us *Christ's* righteousness. We are then seen as "righteous" in the sense of being clothed with God's standard. This then puts us in the position to run in the race and to be led by the Spirit to the land of our calling.

So it cannot be *this* righteousness that the breastplate is referring to. Remember that the armor is for the maturing Christian already in possession of the Word of God, who has determined to run the race set before them. And putting on the armor is something that we DO—a work.

Now, once this initial justification has occurred, we are able to make choices on how we live in this life. We can choose to live by the Spirit, or we can choose to live by the flesh. We have *the freedom* to choose. We can choose RIGHTEOUS ACTS (acts of faithful obedience, walking by the Spirit) or we can choose UNRIGHTEOUS ACTS (walking by the flesh).

Now we come to the breastplate of righteousness, our being justified by works.

What do you think, does it matter what we do and how? Is there maybe a list of good deeds we can follow? If we just do everything on it, that's it, we're in the kingdom?! Or maybe just learn enough and know enough and based on our amazing ability to recall and connect Scripture the Lord will give us a place on His throne?

Think again.

Yes, we have to *do* something. And that something *MUST be done in faith*. Period. We must *believe* what God has said (which means *knowing* what God has said) and then DO IT. There is no other way. We've discussed this before—

Hebrews 11:6

And without faith (4102) it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe (4100) that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

Is there any other way to please God, other than through faith/belief? NO

A person who comes to God (which means approaching Him, drawing near to Him as His child) must believe 2 things: that God is, and that God is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

There is a passage from Habakkuk that is quoted three times in the New Testament—

Habakkuk 2:4

Behold, as for the proud one, his soul is not right within him; but the righteous will live by his faith.

This is also found in 3 other places in Scripture—

Galatians 3:11

Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, "THE RIGHTEOUS MAN SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

Hebrews 10:38

But MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; and if he shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in him.

Romans 1:17

Righteousness

January 27, 2008

For in it [the gospel Paul preached] the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS MAN SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

Who is the "righteous" one referring to? The person who has been clothed by God's standard. *Initial justification.*

How will the righteous one live? BY FAITH. Live—ACTION—by Faith. Faithful acts of obedience.

The Apostle John talks about practicing righteousness versus practicing sin—

I John 3:4-7

⁴ Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness. ⁵ And you know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin. ⁶ No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him. ⁷ Little children, let no one deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous;

John calls "sin" "lawlessness." Sin is missing the mark of God's standard.

And "in Christ" there is no sin. "No one who abides in Him sins." This is the same thought as being faithful in Christ that we talked about last week—

○ **John 15:4-5, 10**

Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing. IF you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love.

And notice that the one who "practices righteousness" is called "righteous."

So we can see a direct connection between *living* by faith and *practicing* righteousness. They are the same thought.

Now think about what John wrote in his epistle. All Christians sin (**I John 1:8**). Does that mean that when a Christian sins, he isn't "abiding in Christ"? What do the Scriptures say? *If a Christian is sinning, he is not abiding in Christ (I John 3:6)*. If a Christian is practicing righteousness (which means not sinning) he is considered righteous, just as Jesus is righteous. Isn't that what it says?

This is obviously speaking of things that occur *after* initial justification. But as we know, all Christians sin—

I John 1:8, 10

⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

And God has given us a provision for our sin—

I John 1:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Notice that this verse calls sin "unrighteousness."

And we have been given clear instructions on what to do with that "unrighteousness."

Read John 15:4-5 again. Not only must **we** abide **in Christ**, He must also abide *in us*. Read the following verses and keep this in mind—

Righteousness

January 27, 2008

Ephesians 5:17-18

¹⁷ So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled [literally, continually filled] with the Spirit.

Colossians 3:16a

Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you...

I Corinthians 3:16

Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

Galatians 5:25

If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Romans 8:13-14

¹³ for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴ For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God.

I John 2:24-26

As for you [church], let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal [age-lasting] life. These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you.

Abiding in Jesus means keeping His commandments. Jesus abiding in us means that we are following Christ's words—the Word of God, the Spirit of God. We abide in Christ by following the Spirit, and not the flesh.

And obviously, keeping His commandments means *doing* something. It's about practicing righteousness; it's about faithful obedience; it's about works! That is our fruit.

Yes, **works**! The word *works* almost seems like a bad word nowadays, doesn't it? But the Scriptures talk about works, so we must talk about works. (

James says it well in his epistle, an epistle that talks about "the salvation of the soul"—

James 1:21

Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.

And further on in the letter—

James 2:14-26

¹⁴ What use is it [Lit., what does it profit], my brethren, if a man says he has faith, but he has works? Can that faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that [Lit., what does it profit]? ¹⁷ Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. ¹⁸ But someone may well say, "You have faith, and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works." ¹⁹ You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. ²⁰ But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless [Lit. dead]? ²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? ²² You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; ²³ and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness," and he was

Righteousness

January 27, 2008

called the friend of God.²⁴ You see that a man is justified by works, and not by faith alone.²⁵ And in the same way was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works, when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way:²⁶ For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

We've already studied that faith by itself is considered righteousness (*cf.* Rom. 4; Gal. 3), but what James is talking about here is the faith that we need to possess in order to *save our souls*. That faith must be accompanied by something—WORKS.

James goes on to call “foolish” the person who doesn't see that works needs to accompany faith (again with respect to the salvation of our soul [1:21], not in respect to our spiritual birth). James says that “faith without works” is dead/useless/of no profit.

So, according to James, can a person's *soul* be saved by faith alone? No. That faith is considered dead. To find out what is meant by “dead,” let's look at the comparison James uses in vv. 15-17. Having faith without works is like telling someone to be warm and filled when they are cold and hungry. *It is of no use to them—it is of no profit.* In this same way, faith is of *no profit* without works.

Our acts of righteousness, our works, are done by faithful obedience to God's Word as we walk in the Spirit. In essence, it is the Spirit that we allow to work in us that produces the acts of righteousness which brings our faith to its goal. We need to believe this to be so, and act accordingly.

The good news is that we don't have to run around busily trying to work for the Lord. He has already taken care of that for us—

Ephesians 2:8-10

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; ⁹ not as a result of works, that no one should boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

We are God's workmanship, created for good works that He prepared *beforehand*.

So, what are we supposed to do with these good works? WALK IN THEM.

There's a beautiful picture in the book of Ruth about walking in the good works that God has prepared beforehand.

Ruth 2:8, 11-12, 15-17

⁸ Then Boaz said to Ruth, “Listen carefully, my daughter. Do not go to glean in another field; furthermore, do not go on from this one, but stay here with my maids. ¹¹ And Boaz answered and said to her, “All that you have done for your mother-in-law after the death of your husband has been fully reported to me, and how you left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and came to a people that you did not previously know. ¹² May the Lord reward your work, and your wages be full from the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to seek refuge.”

¹⁵ When she rose to glean, Boaz commanded his servants, saying, “Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not insult her. ¹⁶ And also you shall purposely pull out for her some grain from the bundles and leave it that she may glean, and do not rebuke her.” ¹⁷ So she gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley.

Explain.

Do you recall what happens to Ruth at the end of her journey? *She got married.*

Righteousness

January 27, 2008

And what is at the end of our journey if we complete it successfully? *We become part of the bride of Christ.*

Let's read these verses from the Book of James again—

James 2:21-22

²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? ²² You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected;

Abraham's faith was perfected by his works. That's what it says.

That word "perfected" is the Greek word *teleioo*. It means "to complete" or "to finish." It (in various forms) is found in the following verses—

James 1:2-4

² Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴ And let endurance have its perfect (teleios) result, that you may perfect (teleios) and complete, lacking in nothing.

Hebrews 2:10

For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect (teleioo) the author of their salvation through sufferings.

Hebrews 6:1

Therefore, leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press onto maturity (teleiotes), not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God...

Hebrews 12:2

...fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter (teleiotes) of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Ephesians 4:13

...until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature (teleios) man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

I Peter 1:9

...receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Explain—sum up.

This next verse will tie this breastplate of righteousness together—

Revelation 19:7-9

⁷ Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready. ⁸ And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. ⁹ And he said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he said to me, "These are the true words of God."

Our wedding garment is our righteous acts. We need a wedding garment to get married. Remember Who were are waiting to marry....and WHY! Jesus, to complete Him in the ruling relationship. It is what it is all about.

What will happen to the one who shows up without a wedding garment? Jesus Himself told us—

Righteousness

January 27, 2008

Matthew 22:1-14

¹ And Jesus answered and spoke to them again in parables, saying, ² “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king, who gave a wedding feast for his son. ³ And he sent out his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast, and they were unwilling to come. ⁴ Again he sent out other slaves saying, ‘Tell those who have been invited, “Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fattened livestock are all butchered and everything is ready; come to the wedding feast.”’ ⁵ But they paid no attention and went their way, one to his own farm, another to this business, ⁶ and the rest seized his slaves and mistreated them and killed them. ⁷ But the king was enraged and sent his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and set their city on fire. ⁸ Then he said to his slaves, ‘The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. ⁹ Go therefore to the main highways, and as many as you find there, invite to the wedding feast.’ ¹⁰ And those slaves went out into the streets, and gathered together all they found, both evil and good; and the wedding hall was filled with dinner guests. ¹¹ But when the king came in to look over the dinner guests, he saw there a man not dressed in wedding clothes, ¹² and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without wedding clothes?’ And he was speechless. ¹³ Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ ¹⁴ For many are called, but few are chosen.”

Explain topic of parables.

The king represents God the Father; the son represents God the Son.

Those who had been invited in v. 3 represent Israel, who were unwilling to come. In fact, those who were invited seized the King’s servants and killed them (Israel killed the prophets). This enraged the king and their city was set on fire (God set Israel aside and took the kingdom from them). They are described as unworthy murderers.

So the king invited others, who did come--US. But a man showed up without wedding clothes. The king calls him “Friend.” But the king’s friend did not have on the proper attire, so he was thrown out.

MANY ARE CALLED, BUT FEW ARE CHOSEN [CALLED OUT].

How important is it *for you* to be making your wedding garment right now? How important is it that you have on your breastplate of righteousness? The armor of God will help you stand firm against the enemy. The enemy wants to disqualify you from receiving your inheritance.

Again, how important is this?

Have you noticed that the word “works” makes most Christians cringe? Why is that? The enemy has done a thorough job of perverting all thoughts surrounding works, because he knows that it is our *faithful works* that are judged at the judgment seat of Christ and it is our *faithful works* that determine whether we rule and reign with Christ—a position that our enemy currently holds and is not willing to let go of. Do not be deceived! Understand what *God* has to say about works, not what *man* has to say about works.

There is a future judgment for Christians. This judgment pertains to the salvation of the soul and it will be based entirely on works—*our* works. These works must be done in faithful obedience to what God has said. *Faith* concerning future things (which is what God’s Word is all about), and *obedient works* emanating out of *that faith* are what get counted to us as righteousness, over and over and over again. These righteous acts make up our wedding garment.

The judgment seat of Christ takes place in the heavens at the end of this age. All Christians will appear before Jesus. He will judge each one of us in relation to entering or *not* entering into His kingdom—

II Corinthians 5:10

Righteousness

January 27, 2008

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

The Book of Revelation gives us much information concerning that future day. The seven Churches pictured in Revelation represent the complete Church in His presence on that day. *That means that these words are of utmost importance to us today; they serve as warnings to us.*

Explain the 7—chronological and complete.

The seventh, and final Church in His presence on that judgment day—

Revelation 3:14-20

¹⁴ And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this: ¹⁵ I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I would that you were cold or hot. ¹⁶ So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. ¹⁷ Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. ¹⁸ I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich, and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see. ¹⁹ Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore, and repent. ²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me.

Sum up passage.

"THAT YOU MAY SEE"—

Matthew 13:11, 16-17

¹¹ [Jesus speaking] "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens, but to them it has not been granted. ¹⁶ But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. ¹⁷ For truly I say to you, that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it; and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."

Let's go over what Jesus says to the Churches regarding changing their behavior. God saw fit to record these things so that we can read them and learn from them. We have opportunity *right now* to change. In that coming day, as we each stand before our Lord and Judge, we will *not* have an opportunity. It will be too late then!

(Thank you Lord for preserving these words!)

I'll summarize them, in order— (You want your "to do" list? Here it is!)

Remember from where you've fallen.

Repent.

Do the deeds you did at first.

Repent.

Overcome.

Be faithful until death.

Overcome.

Repent.

Overcome.

What you have, hold fast until He comes.

Overcome.

Righteousness

January 27, 2008

Wake up.
Strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die.
Remember what you have received and heard, and keep it.
Repent.
Overcome.
Hold fast what you have.
Overcome.
Keep His deeds until the end.
Buy from Him gold refined by fire.
Buy from Him white garments to clothe yourself (*righteous acts*).
Buy from Him eye salve to see.
Be zealous.
Repent.
Open the door that He's knocking on.
Overcome.

Now we'll read *the promises* He makes to those who do these things—

I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.
You will not be hurt by the second death.
I will give some of the hidden manna.
I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone.
I will give him the morning star.
I will give him authority over the nations.
You will rule them with a rod of iron.
You will be clothed in white raiment.
I will not erase your name from the book of life.
I will confess your name before My Father and before His angels.
I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God.
You will not leave the temple of My God.
I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, and My new name.
I will grant to you to sit down with Me on My throne.