

The Life of Christ

Course 2

Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life...." John 14:6

Lesson 8



Jesus Christ Our Righteousness

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Dear Friend,

Man was created to glorify God and to enjoy fellowship with Him, but because of man's rebellion and sin, he became separated from God. The purpose of salvation is to bring us back into right relationship with the holy God so that we may once again enjoy fellowship with Him.

Because we are sinful human beings, it is almost impossible for us to understand or even conceive of the holiness of God. The Bible teaches that God is all light and glory. He is perfect in righteousness and purity. He is absolutely holy and without sin. Many times in the Bible darkness stands for sin, and the Bible says of God,

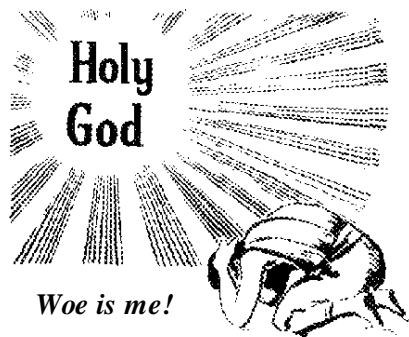
*"... God is light, and in Him is no darkness [no sin] at all."
John 1:5*

The prophet Isaiah once had a vision in which he saw the Lord God on His throne. Around the throne were heavenly beings who were praising God, saying, "Holy, holy,

holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory."

Isaiah was so overcome by what he saw of the glory and holiness of God that he cried out,

*"Woe is me! for I am undone;
because I am a man of unclean lips,
and I in the midst of a people of unclean lips:
for mine eyes have seen the King,
the Lord of hosts."
Isaiah 6:5*



Isaiah realized he did not have the righteousness he needed.

What was it that caused Isaiah to say, "Woe is me, for I am undone"?

It was his sense of sinfulness. Isaiah realized that he did not have the righteousness he needed to be in the presence of the holy and glorious God.

•WE MUST HAVE A RIGHTEOUSNESS THAT IS ACCEPTABLE TO GOD

To enjoy fellowship with God, we must not only know that we have been forgiven of every sin but we must also know that we are clothed with a righteousness that is acceptable to God.

There is a difference between forgiveness and righteousness. Forgiveness is like taking a bath; righteousness is like putting on clothes. We take a bath that we might be cleansed from all impurities. We put on clothes that we might be properly dressed to appear before people.

When we expect to visit important people, we always think, "What shall

I wear?" If we had an audience with the president or with a king, we would be very concerned about our clothing.

When we pray to God or enjoy fellowship with Him, we are, in a sense, coming into His presence. And when we think about coming into the presence of the holy God, we realize that we must be clothed in a special way. We must be clothed with a righteousness that is acceptable to God.

What kind of righteousness does God accept? The only kind of righteousness which is acceptable to God is a perfect righteousness.

•CAN WE PRODUCE A PERFECT RIGHTEOUSNESS?

Can we produce a righteousness that is acceptable to God? No, we cannot. No matter how hard we try, we cannot obey the commandments of God perfectly. The Bible says,

*"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one ...
"... there is none that doeth good, no, not one. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
Romans 3:10,12,13*

Even our "righteousnesses" - the best things we do - cannot make us acceptable to God. The Bible says,

*"We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags"
Isaiah 64:5*

What we can never do ourselves, God has done for us. He provides a perfect righteousness for His people. The prophet Isaiah rejoiced when he thought about the righteousness that God provides for His people. Isaiah wrote,

*"I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness"
Isaiah 61:10*

•HOW DOES GOD MAKE US RIGHTEOUS?

How does God make us perfectly righteous in His sight? He does this by putting us IN CHRIST. The Bible says,

*"Of Him [God] are you IN CHRIST JESUS"
I Corinthians 1:30*



The believer is IN CHRIST.

The words IN CHRIST express the glorious position God has given to the believer. How did we get into Christ? God put us there! We could not put ourselves IN CHRIST, but God has done this for us. The Bible says, "Of Him are you IN CHRIST JESUS."

We ourselves are not righteous, but God has put us IN CHRIST. When God looks at us, He does not see us as we are, He sees only Christ. Because we are IN CHRIST, we have a perfect righteousness before God. Christ is our righteousness. The Bible says,

"For He [God] has made Him [Christ] to be sin [a sin offering], for us, who knew

*no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.
2 Corinthians 5:21*

This verse says that we are made "the righteousness of God" IN CHRIST. This righteousness is perfect because Christ is perfect. This righteousness never changes because Christ never changes. The righteousness is now our righteousness because we are IN CHRIST.

This perfect righteousness is not obtained by our works. We cannot produce it ourselves. It is given to us as a free gift when we take Christ as our Savior. The Bible says,

*"... they which receive abundance of grace and THE GIFT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ."
Romans 5:17*

The Apostle Paul was a very religious man. He worked hard trying to produce his own righteousness. But Paul came to see that he could never make himself acceptable to God by his own works.

What did Paul do? He put his faith in Jesus Christ and received God's gift of perfect righteousness. Paul wrote,

*"... I count all things but loss ... that I may win Christ, And be found IN HIM, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."
Philippians 3:8,9*

This wonderful gift of perfect righteousness is not just for the Apostle Paul. It is for all believers. The moment we believed, God put us IN CHRIST and we received this perfect righteousness.

•GOD ACCEPTS US BECAUSE WE ARE IN CHRIST

God accepts us fully and completely because we are IN CHRIST. The Bible says, "He has made us accepted in the beloved." The "Beloved" is the Lord Jesus. We are accepted in Him.

God loves His Son and delights in Him. From all eternity Jesus has been the object of God the Father's pleasure and delight. When Jesus was baptized, the Father spoke from Heaven saying,

*"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
Matthew 3:17*

Because we are IN CHRIST, God accepts us in the same way He does His own Son. Just as He loves the Son and delights in Him, so He loves us and delights in us. This is so wonderful that we find it hard to believe. But it is true. Jesus prayed to the Father concerning His believers,

*"that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them, as You have loved Me."
John 17:23*

•OUR CONDUCT AND OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

As Christians we should understand the difference between our righteousness before God and our

daily conduct here on earth.

Our righteousness before God is the way God sees us IN CHRIST. We are made "the righteousness of God" in Christ. This righteousness is perfect. It never changes. When did you receive this perfect righteousness? You received it the moment you received Christ as your Savior.

Our conduct is the way we live on earth. It is very changeable and it is never perfect. Our conduct may vary considerably in a single day.

Perhaps yesterday we had a good day. We read our Bible, spent time with God in prayer, and managed to keep from losing our temper. Consequently, we felt quite good about ourselves, and we felt that God was likewise pleased with us. We felt good about coming to God in prayer and fellowship.

Today, however, it is a different story. We did not take time to pray and read God's Word. We have been disagreeable with others and we have lost our temper. We are quite disappointed with ourselves and we feel that God is likewise disappointed with us. Consequently, we do not feel that we can come into God's presence with boldness.

What are we doing? We are looking at our conduct as the basis of our acceptance with God. This is a mistake. Our acceptance with God is based on the fact that we are IN CHRIST. We stand before God in the righteousness of Christ.

It grieves God when we live

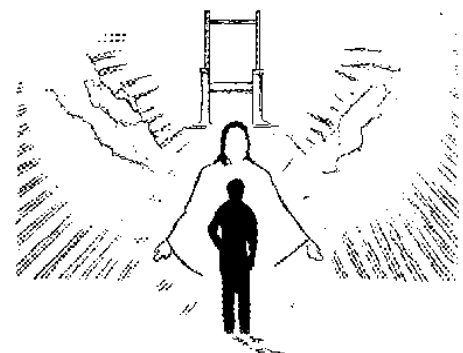
carelessly. The Holy Spirit convicts us when we sin. If we are disobedient and continue in our sins, God will discipline us. He may even have to chasten us.

But when God is correcting and chastening us, He still loves and accepts us fully because we are IN CHRIST. We are accepted because we are in His beloved Son. The Bible says,

*"To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He has made us accepted in the Beloved [IN CHRIST]."
Ephesians 1:6*

When God says that we are "accepted in the Beloved," He means just that. We are always accepted in Christ. When we fail, we need to confess our sins to God. But our sins and failures should never keep us from coming to God for mercy and grace The Bible says,

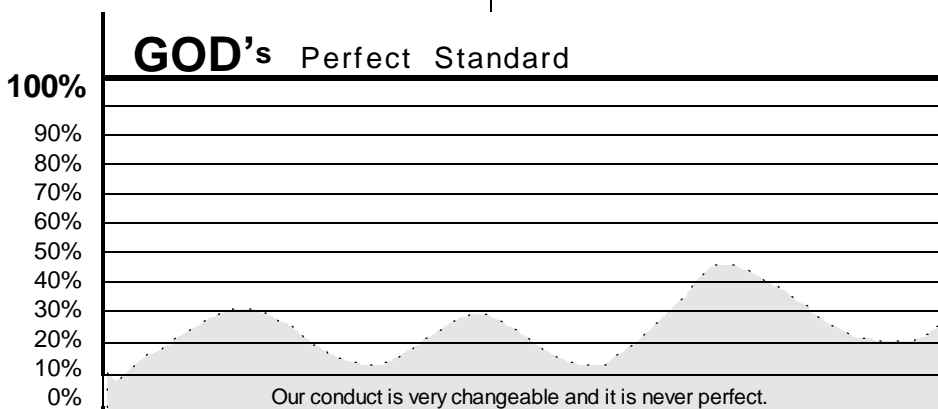
*"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."
Hebrews 4:16*



We are IN CHRIST. We stand before God in His righteousness.

• JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF IS OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

In His Word, God commands us to "Rejoice in the Lord always." No



matter what our circumstances are, we can always rejoice in the Lord Jesus - who He is and what He has done for us. We can rejoice especially in the fact that He is our righteousness.

It is the Lord Jesus Himself who is our righteousness. One of His names in the Old Testament is "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." The Bible says,

*"... and this is His name
whereby He shall be called,
THE LORD OUR
RIGHTEOUSNESS."
Jeremiah 23:6*

Our righteousness before God is not something we are or something we have done. Our righteousness is the Lord Jesus Christ. God has put us IN CHRIST and He is our righteousness. The Bible says,

*"But of Him [God] are you
IN CHRIST JESUS, who of
God is made unto us...
RIGHTEOUSNESS" 1
Corinthians 1:30*

To whom does this verse belong? It belongs to very believer. Every believer is IN CHRIST. Every

believer can say, "Christ is my righteousness."



Christ is our Righteousness.

• WE MUST SEE OURSELVES AS GOD SEES US

We must begin to see ourselves as God sees us - perfectly righteous IN CHRIST. This perfect righteousness is God's gift to us because we are IN CHRIST. You are not the person you used to be. You are a "new creature IN CHRIST." The Bible says,

*"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*

Just as God looks at His Son and sees Him perfectly righteous, so He looks at us and sees us perfectly righteous because we are in Him.

God wants us to live our lives each day in the full consciousness of being righteous in His sight because we are IN CHRIST. Say to yourself again and again, "I am in Christ! He is my righteousness!"

There is no truth in the Bible more important for us as Christians than knowing that we are IN CHRIST and that He is our righteousness. This is something God did for us when we took Christ as our Savior. Read this lesson over and over. Ask God to show you that you are indeed IN CHRIST and that He is your righteousness.




Discovered Gem

God has put me IN CHRIST and I stand before God in His righteousness.


QUIET TIME HIGHLIGHTS

WEEK - 8


There is a Bible passage listed for each day. Read it carefully. Write out the verse(s) that impress you most. Then write down in your own words what it is in the verse(s) that impresses you. Perhaps you have a personal need that the Lord answers for you in the Scripture. Or perhaps He shows you something about Himself that you have not known before. This is YOUR Personal Quiet Time with the Lord, so keep it personal.

 **MONDAY Read:** **John 11:45-57**
 Verse(s) that impressed me most: _____


This is what impresses me about the verse(s): _____

 **TUESDAY** **Read: John 12:1-11**
 Verses(s) that impressed me most: _____


This is what impresses me about the verses(s) _____

 **WEDNESDAY** **Read: John 12:12-19**
 Verse(s) that impressed me most: _____


This is what impresses me about the verse(s): _____

 **THURSDAY** **Read: John 12:20-36**
 Verse(s) that impressed me most: _____


This is what impresses me about the verse(s): _____

 **FRIDAY** **Read : John 12:37-41**
 Verse(s) that impressed me most: _____

This is what impressed me about the verse(s) _____

 **SATURDAY** **Read: John 12:42-50**
 Verse(s) that impressed me most: _____

This is what impresses me about the verse(s): _____

 **SUNDAY** **Read: John 13:1-17**
 Verse(s) that impressed me most: _____

This is what impresses me about the verse(s): _____

QUESTIONS PAGES

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Turn to the Questions page as you finish each lesson. Fill in the answers for that lesson before going on to the next lesson.
2. When you have studied the lessons and have completed both Question Pages, carefully detach these question pages. Fold them carefully for mailing with a First Class stamp on the envelope. Or go on the web to www.ednetusa.com and email us your exam.

Don't forget to write in your name and complete return address.

Send in your ANSWER SHEETS ONLY!
 Save your lessons for future reference.

QUESTIONS

INSTRUCTIONS: Select the best answer (a), (b), or (c), and write it in the square provided.

- 1. The purpose of salvation is
 - (a) to make us happy.
 - (b) to bring us back into right relationship with the holy God.
 - (c) to make us good church members.
- 2. To enjoy fellowship with God, we must not only know that all our sins are forgiven, but we must also
 - (a) know that we are clothed with a righteousness that is acceptable to Him.
 - (b) be accepted and liked by people.
 - (c) be a preacher or a full-time servant of God.
- 3. The only kind of righteousness which is acceptable to God is
 - (a) one that is better than most other people.
 - (b) one that is equal to that of the very best people we know.
 - (c) a perfect righteousness
- 4. God makes us perfectly righteous in His sight by
 - (a) changing us so that we become better persons.
 - (b) putting us IN CHRIST.
 - (c) helping us to be like the best people we know.
- 5. This perfect righteousness is
 - (a) Given to us as a free gift when we take Christ as our Savior.
 - (b) Obtained by faithful attendance in all church services.
 - (c) obtained by doing many good works over a long period of time.

- 6. Our acceptance with God is based on
 - (a) our daily conduct.
 - (b) the good things we do.
 - (c) our being IN CHRIST.
- 7. When God is correcting and chastening us,
 - (a) He still loves us and accepts us fully because we are IN CHRIST.
 - (b) He is disappointed with us and does not love us.
 - (c) He will not speak to us.
- 8. When we fail, we need to
 - (a) avoid coming to God for mercy and grace.
 - (b) do some good things to make up for our sins.
 - (c) confess our sins to God.
- 9. Our righteousness before God is
 - (a) a person - the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (b) our daily conduct.
 - (c) the many good things we have done.
- 10. God wants us to live or lives each day
 - (a) knowing that we are miserable sinners in His sight.
 - (b) trying to make ourselves acceptable to Him.
 - (c) knowing that we are perfectly righteous in His sight because we are IN CHRIST.

What is the most important thing you have learned in this lesson?

PLEASE PRINT You must return answer sheet before you get next lesson.

Name _____ Phone _____ Age _____

Parent's name _____ Apt# _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

