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A GREAT SERMON ON JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION-FAITH AND WORKS

A surprising number of measuring devices can be found in and around an ordinary home. In our kitchen we have measuring spoons, measuring cups of many different sizes, containers in pint, quart and gallon sizes, a cold indicator for the freezer, a heat indicator for making yogurt, and a heat indicator on the oven.

A thermometer hangs on the bedroom wall and another of a different type is in the medicine closet. In the sewing box is a three-foot flexible tape measure, and in a desk drawer three different kinds of rulers. On a closet shelf is a camera with a light meter, on a pantry shelf a food scale, and on the bathroom floor a scale of a different type.

In the garage are steel measuring tapes (12 foot and 50 foot), a tri-square and a framing square, a volt-meter for testing the electrical currents in housewiring, a hydrometer for testing automobile batteries, a tire pressure gauge, and feeler gauges for measuring the gap in spark plugs. In the car itself are a variety of gauges with needles and/or lights, and on the water tank there is a gauge for measuring water pressure. These are probably not unlike the measuring devices to be found in many homes.

May we suggest an experiment? Gather all the measuring devices you can find in your home, put them together on a table and study them for a few moments. You will quickly observe that they are of two kinds. Some are used for measuring *objects*, and some are for measuring *forces*. We could separate them into two groups:

To measure objects

Spoons

Cups

Tapes

Rulers

Squares

Feeler Gauges

To measure forces

Thermometers (to measure heat and cold)

Light meters (to measure light)

Volt meters (to measure electricity)

Pressure Gauges (to measure air pressure, vacuum, or water pressure) Scales (to measure gravity's effect on an object)

Scales are perhaps a bit tricky. We think of using them to measure an object's weight. But is weight an intrinsic quality of an object, or is it the effect of gravity on that object? A nice question. We may settle the matter by noting that without gravity an object would have no weight but would float off into space. After reflection, we would probably put the scales in the force-measuring group.

Now we have our measuring devices separated into two categories, and we are ready for the next question. How are they used? How do they do their work? Again, we see a difference. Those devices that measure objects do it by establishing the physical dimensions of that object — its length, breadth, and depth, that is, its *mass*.

But those devices that are used to measure forces must use a different method. Forces do not have length, breadth, depth, or mass. We do not ask, How heavy is this light? Or, How wide is this heat? These would be considered nonsensical questions. So — how can we measure such forces as heat, light, electricity, etc.?

Somebody, somewhere, had a great idea. Let the force do some *work*. Then use that work as a measurement of the force. Let the force move a carefully calibrated needle across the face of a gauge, or elevate mercury in a column, or thrust a shaft out of a tube, or light test bulbs of different sizes. And this *work* will tell us what we need to know about the force.

This has proven to be a quite satisfactory method of measuring forces. A fifty-thousand pound tractor-trailer combination speeding down the highway must be stopped, if necessary, by a relatively tiny amount of compressed air in a small tank beneath the tractor's frame. (It may be as little as sixty pounds of air pressure.) Yet the driver is unconcerned because on the dashboard before him is a gauge with a small needle that accurately measures the force of the air pressure by the work that it does, i.e., pressing against the carefully calibrated needle. Thus the driver always knows how much braking power is at his disposal. He trusts his instruments.

Airplane pilots trust their instruments to guide them safely through darkness, and ship pilots trust their instruments to guide them through storms. Experience has taught them that the instruments can be trusted. This is just another way of saying that forces may be measured with accuracy by the "work" that they do. This is by no means an untrustworthy system of taking measurements.

From our experience and observation we therefore draw two conclusions: First, forces cannot be measured directly but must be measured by the work they perform. We are not able to call to mind any exceptions to this rule. Second: measuring forces by the work they perform is an accurate and trustworthy procedure. The results are uniform, consistent, and dependable.

This leads to an important question. What is *faith*? Is it an object, or is it a force? Does faith have length, width, and depth — that is, mass? Obviously not. Faith is clearly a *force*. And since it is a force, it must be measured, like all forces, by the work that it performs. There is no other way. Thus the apostle Paul recommends to us ". . . faith that worketh by love." Galatians 5:6. And the apostle James warns that ". . . faith without works is dead." James 2:17.

The testimony of the measuring device must be accepted. It is trustworthy and reliable. An absence of works means no saving faith is present.

Does this mean that we are saved by works? *By no means!* The measuring device cannot perform the function of the force. The thermometer on our wall can tell us if our furnace is working, but it cannot heat our house. A pressure gauge can measure the force in a braking system, but it cannot stop the truck. A volt-meter can measure the force in an electrical system, but it cannot operate an appliance. There is no use plugging your toaster into a volt-meter. Measuring devices perform a valued service, but they cannot play the role of forces. Works provide a measurement of faith, but works cannot perform the function of faith. We cannot be saved by works. Hence Ellen White writes

While good works will not save even one soul, yet it is impossible
for even one soul to be saved without good works. 1 SM 377

The mighty works of Jesus provide us with a measurement of His faith. It was by faith that He lived a pure and holy life, worked amazing miracles, overpowered the elements of nature, and raised the dead. It was by faith that He endured the contradiction of sinners, surrendered Himself to the power of wicked men, and was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. It was in faith that He uttered the triumphant shout, "It is finished," and yielded His spirit to His Heavenly Father. His was a faith that worked by love — unmistakably recognizable, easily measured. Even so must our own faith be measured.

Which leads to another question: Who needs a measurement of faith? Actually, everybody does.

God does not need a measurement of faith for His own information. He can read the human heart, but the inhabitants of other worlds cannot. So — God needs a measurement of faith to show the watching worlds why it is safe for Him to save us.

The world needs a measurement of faith in order to distinguish between the believer and the non-believer, and in order to distinguish between pretended faith and the real thing. The church needs a measurement of faith in order to make wise assignments of responsibility to church workers. To send a person of weak faith to a mission field, or even on a difficult home base assignment, can be a very costly mistake.

And we as individuals need something other than feeling for a measurement of our own faith. Without

it, we might find ourselves disagreeing with God. It is not inconceivable that God might say to us, "Your faith has been growing weaker for some time now."

And we might answer, "On the contrary, Lord. I feel very good about my faith."

But when God says, "Where is the evidence? What is your faith *doing*?" a clearer self realization will come to us.

So — everybody needs a measurement of faith, and this measurement is what we call *works*.

Is this legalism? Not at all. A work *of faith* cannot be called legalistic. That would be a contradiction in terms. Legalism is a work *not of faith in which no love is present*.

For example: You are driving to work some morning, and you find a newly erected stop sign at an intersection near your home. You stop. But you are not happy about it. You say to yourself, "What stupid officials we have in this city! There is no need for a stop sign on that corner! This is ridiculous, but if I don't stop I might get a ticket, and so I will do it."

You have performed a work, but this is not a work of faith. It is a work of the law — legalism. No love is involved. You have no desire to please the officials or honor their wishes. With man's laws this is enough. Man's laws ask for nothing more than the outward works, the *motions* of the law.

God's law is different. Suppose that you are going to be baptized, but again you are not happy about it. As you enter the water you are thinking, "What a stupid, old-fashioned ceremony! They should have gotten rid of this years ago. It's ridiculous, but if I don't do it, I might be lost, so I will do it."

Again, you have performed a work, but it is a work *not of faith*. No love is involved. It is a work of law, a *motion* of law-keeping, legalism. Man accepts this kind of obedience, but God does not. God insists that our works must be *of faith that works by love*. He will not accept empty motions of law-keeping. Only the fruits of a faith that works by love can be a measurement of that spiritual force called faith.

When we go into the waters of baptism because we love our Lord and delight to do His will, this is *faith working by love*, which Paul recommended to the Galatians. The same principle applies to Sabbath-keeping, tithe-paying, or any other part of God's revealed will.

Why should we find this principle — that faith is a force that can be measured only by works — hard to understand? We apply the same

principle daily in relation to other forces. We do not try to measure heat, light, or electricity by establishing their physical dimensions. Neither do we try to get along without measuring them. And we would certainly not even think of mistaking the measuring device for the force, or of expecting it to play the role of the force.

Let us fix our minds firmly on this truth. Faith is a force, not an object. Therefore, it must be measured by its works, not by its dimensions. And the measuring device does not bring us salvation.

Our salvation is in Jesus Christ. Salvation comes to us through the faith that embraces Him and is proved to be genuine by its inevitable fruit (good works).

Now genuine faith always works by love. When you look to Calvary it is not to quiet your soul in the non-performance of duty . . . but to create faith in Jesus, faith that will work, purifying the soul. . . . II SM 20.

RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH

Righteousness by faith. What does it really mean? How does it work? Is there something deeply mysterious about it? If it is a mystery that only a few Christians have understood, what real hope is there that we can understand it?

Righteousness by faith is neither a complicated mystery nor a kind of magic formula. It is readily within the intellectual grasp of any Christian, young or old. Neither a graduate degree in theology nor in psychology is required. But as with so many other beautifully clear and simple truths, mysteries are indeed created by human evasions, false interpretations, counterfeits, and substitutes. Why should this surprise us? Has not the enemy of souls endeavored to shroud all of the saving truths of the Gospel in deep mystery? Let's not let him get away with it.

First, let's look at the words — define the terms.

Righteousness means the quality or condition of right doing. Check any dictionary; then see Ellen White's definition in *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 312:

Righteousness is right doing....

By in this usage is simply a shorter way of saying "by means of," as in "This car is powered *by* a gasoline engine," or "This motor is run *by* electricity." In all such uses, "by means of" is understood. We need not concern ourselves about confusion with the other major use of the word *by*, to indicate a *position*. The description of the house "by the side of the road," or the car "by the side of the house," could hardly be confused with the sense of "by means of."

Faith indicates our means of gaining the power by which we do right. The power is not in us. It is in God, in Christ, in the Holy Spirit. We receive that power by faith. There is no other way. Attempts to live lives of right doing without power from our Creator-God are utterly hopeless. They cannot possibly succeed.

Putting all of this together, we have: "Righteousness by Faith" means *right doing by means of power received from God*. We might call this *sanctification*.

But this falls short of meeting our need. What about our *past* wrong doing? Is this just forgotten when we start to do right? Not exactly. Past wrong doing must be forgiven, covered, *justified*. Yes, justify *does* mean forgive. Again, check the word in any large dictionary. Then see Ellen White's definition in the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Volume VI, page 1070:

Pardon and justification are one and the same thing.

So — in addition to *sanctification* we need *justification*. Both come to us only by faith.

But enough of human reasoning. Let us return to the simple beauty of the Scriptures. In John 5:24 we find the words of Jesus:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Notice the two uses of the present tense: *Hath* everlasting life . . . *is passed* from death unto life.

Did Jesus mean that believers will not go into the grave? Obviously not, because He goes right on to predict a time when:

. . . all that are in the graves shall hear His voice,

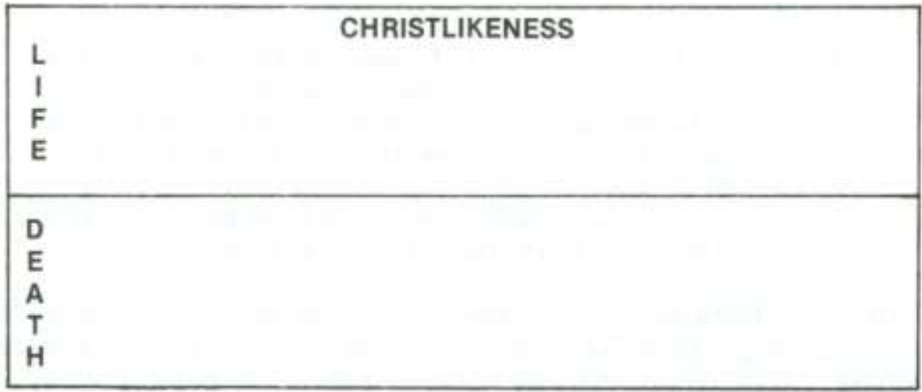
And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. (Verses 28, 29)

Believers do go into the grave, but they carry with them the "title deed" to everlasting life. This we understand. If we should ever happen to get a car paid for before it wears out, we receive a title deed proving our right of ownership. The best part of this arrangement is that a copy of the title deed is securely registered in the state house. We can dispose of it if we wish, but it cannot be taken from us without our consent.

Even so, our title deed to eternal life is registered securely in Heaven's state house. We can dispose of it if we wish, but we cannot lose it. It can be removed from Heaven's state house only by our decision. Remember, it became our possession when we first believed and accepted Jesus Christ.

In the book of Ezekiel, chapter 33, we find four descriptions, each a case study that helps us to understand how God brings salvation to man. We will plot the four case studies on a chart with a dividing line across its center. The dividing line indicates our decision to turn from sin, accept Christ as our Saviour, and serve Him. Above the line we place the word *Life*, and below the line we place the word *Death*. At the very top of the chart we place the word *Christlikeness*.

Each person begins his life with freedom of choice.



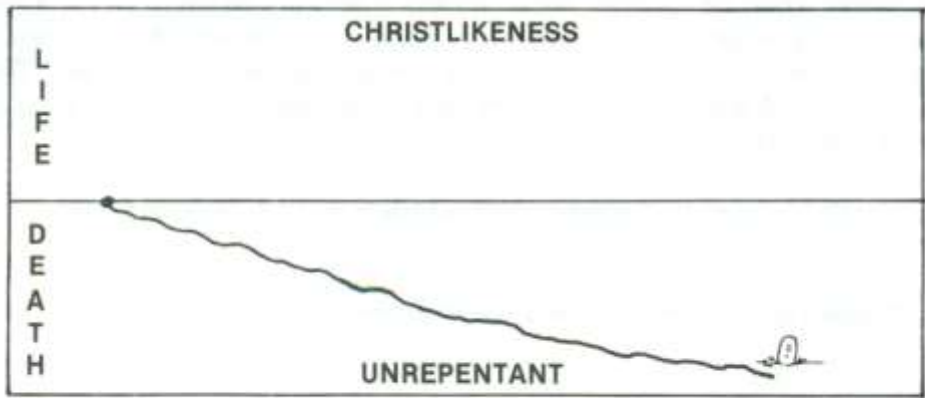
In Ezekiel 33:79 we find our first case study, The Unrepentant Sinner.

So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.

When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, *that wicked man shall die in his iniquity*. but his blood will I require at thine hand.

Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, *he shall die in his iniquity*; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

This man never believes and accepts Jesus Christ, never responds to the love of God or to the pleading of the Holy Spirit, never crosses the line from death to life. We would plot his experience on the chart like this:



Notice how his life without Christ goes downward. He did not improve with age. His heart became hardened by continually resisting the influences of the Holy Spirit. Perhaps, like many others, he actually planned to make things right with God someday, but not right now. The day of surrender to God never arrived, but the day of surrender to death did arrive. "Died in his sin" is his epitaph. He never crossed from death to life.

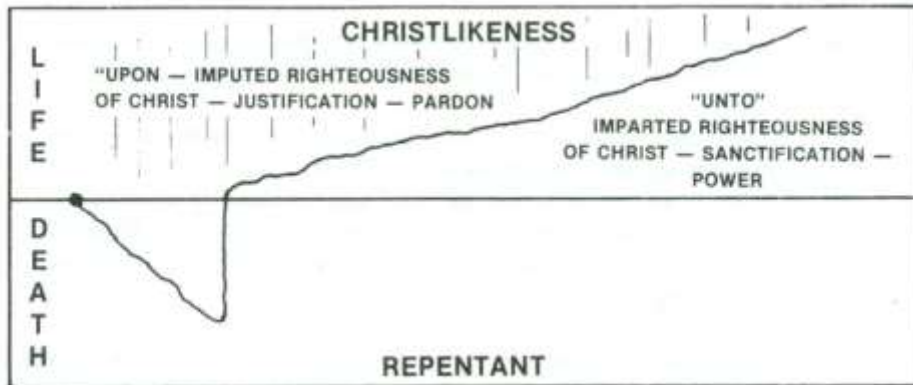
Case Study Number Two is found in Ezekiel 33:14-16:

Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; *if he turn from his sin*, and do that which is lawful and right;

If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die.

None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live.

The New Testament word "repent" actually carries the thought of turning, not greatly different from the word "turn" that is used in this chapter. We are now considering the experience of The Repentant Sinner. We would plot his experience on the chart like this:



Notice that this man's life is not unlike the first man's life until that moment when he *believes, turns*, makes a decision to surrender his life to God. His course is now upward instead of downward. He is growing in grace, becoming more Christlike every day by the power of God. The Apostle Paul adds an explanatory note in Romans 3:23. Let us read it slowly and thoughtfully:

Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, *unto all and upon all* them that believe. . .

- Whose righteousness? God's righteousness.
- How do we receive it? *By faith of Jesus Christ.*
- It is *unto* all that believe, — the *imparted* righteousness of Christ, *sanctification*.
- It is *upon* all that believe, — the *imputed* righteousness of Christ, *justification*.

This scripture, Romans 3:23, is one of the grandest verses in the entire Bible. It is the concept that revolutionized the life of the Apostle Paul, and made him the greatest evangelist the world has ever seen; other than Jesus Christ Himself. It is what sent him rampaging over the Roman Empire, shouting at the top of his voice, as it were:

Anybody can make it! Anybody can have eternal life! There is help for us — help enough for anybody! Anybody can make it!

Is this not the message of Hebrews 7:25?

Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.

Our study of the Scripture and the chart makes these points evident:

The sinner passes from death to life in a moment of time, as long as it takes him to make a decision.

His sins of the past (Romans 3:25) are covered by the Righteousness of Christ *upon* him, *imputed* to him. He is forgiven, pardoned, *justified*, an instantaneous procedure.

The power of God for right doing is the Righteousness of Christ *unto* him, *imparted* to him, bringing him *sanctification*, a continuing procedure.

As long as he continues in his attitude of faith, he remains on the life side of the chart. We may think that we see imperfections in him, but God does not. God sees him as *perfect in Christ*. Notice how Ellen White describes it:

When it is in the heart to obey God, when efforts are put forth to this end, Jesus accepts this disposition and effort as man's best service, and He makes up for the deficiency with His own divine merit. *Selected Messages*, Volume I, page 382.

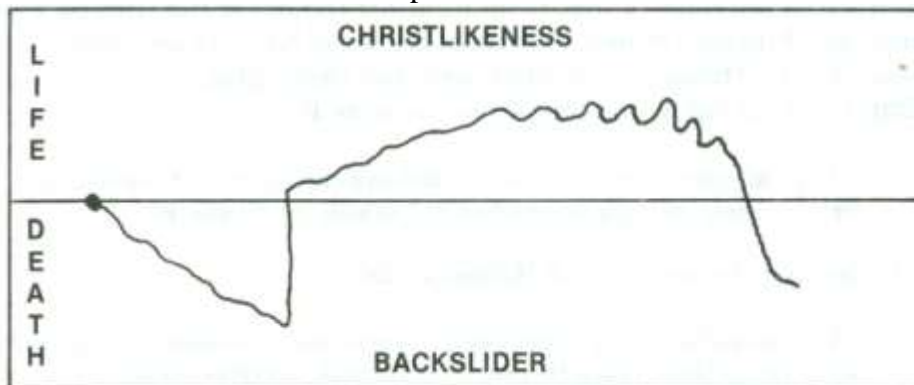
God does not show the repentant sinner everything that is wrong with him and that must be changed all at one moment. This might overwhelm him with discouragement. God leads him along step by step, correcting, leading, guiding, and perfecting, making him Christlike. As long as the repentant sinner abides in Christ, believing, trusting, obeying, **he is on**

the Life side of the chart. He is *perfect in Christ*. He has the title deed to eternal life. This title

deed cannot be lost, but it can be surrendered, disposed of. This leads to our next case study, The Backslider. It is found in Ezekiel 33:18:

When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby.

On the chart the Backslider's experience would look like this:



This man passes from death to life in a moment of time, and starts happily on the heavenward way. But then something happens. He gets too busy to study his Bible, too busy to pray, and his soul experiences slow starvation. Instead of advancing from victory to victory, he levels off into an uneven plateau experience. Things that had dropped out of his life begin to reappear. Bad habits reassert themselves. Eventually he "turns" again, in the wrong direction. He goes back across the line from life to death.

What is it that takes him back across the line? We will let the Apostle John tell us in I John 2:1:

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye in not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

This is a verse that has lost some of its meaning in translation. We see no difference in English in the two uses of the word "sin." In Greek there was a very significant difference both in spelling and in meaning. The apostle used in the first "sin" a form called *linear* (like a line). It refers to a continuous, unceasing practice. In the second usage he changed to a *punctiliar* (like a point) form. It refers to an isolated, individual act, as contrasted with a habitual practise. There is no advocate for sinning that is a continuous, unceasing practise. There is an advocate for the isolated act, recognized, confessed, and repented of.

Although we have no knowledge that Ellen White ever studied Greek, it does appear that she understood the difference between linear and punctiliar verbs. Observe the linear sense of these passages:

. . . no man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ's righteousness *while practising known sins, or neglecting known duties.* *Selected Messages*, Volume I, page 366.

No one can believe with the heart unto righteousness, and obtain justification by faith, *while continuing the practise* of those things which the Word of God forbids, or *while neglecting* any known duty. *Selected Messages*, Volume I, page 396.

What is it, then, that takes the backslider from the life side of the chart and returns him to the death side? In modern language we might describe it as *cherished* sin. Notice Ellen White's warning in *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 316:

The righteousness of Christ will not cover one *cherished* sin.

In Ellen White's writings the term "cherished sin" is used consistently to describe that which separates the soul from God. Notice the application of this principle to the sin of Moses and Aaron in smiting the rock:

Had Moses and Aaron been cherishing self-esteem or indulging a passionate spirit in the face of divine warnings and reproof, their guilt would have been far greater. But they were not chargeable with willful or deliberate sin; they had been overcome by a sudden temptation, and their contrition was immediate and heartfelt. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 419

(Let us explain to the Greek scholars who might read this paper that we are rejecting the proposal by Dana and Mantey that the first "sin" in 1 John 2:1 is a second aorist, (page 195 of their grammar) and reading it

as a present subjunctive active. This is in harmony with the principles set forth in the grammar prepared by Dr. William Hershey Davis (page 75) and, actually, the principles set forth in their own grammar by Dana and Mantey (page 283). We feel that Dana and Mantey are not even consistent with themselves, and that their proposal in regard to 1 John 2:1 is more of a theological interpretation than a translation.)

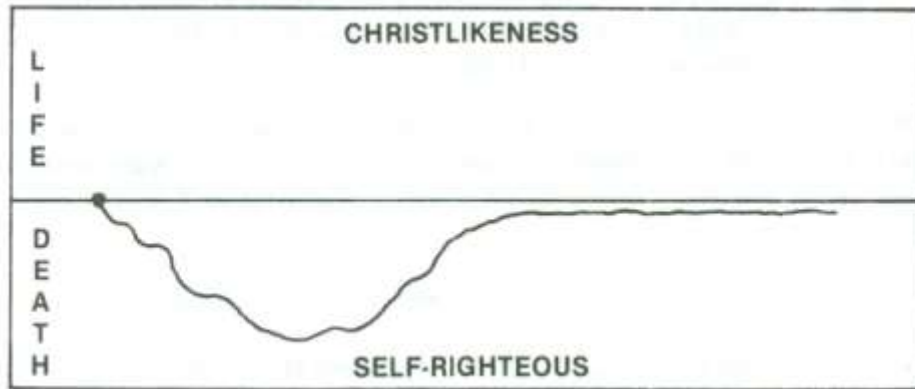
Before leaving the backslider, let us point out that his condition is not hopeless. He may, if he chooses, repent and return to God and live. He will be again on the Life side of the chart.

I will heal their backsliding; I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away from him.
Hosea 14:4

Our fourth and last case study in Ezekiel 33 is the experience of The Self-Righteous Man. It is brought to view in verse 13:

When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered, but his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it.

On the chart The Self-Righteous Man's experience would look like this:



This man's life moves in a downward direction, like that of many others, until he gets some better ideas. Perhaps he reads some good books or meets and admires certain people. He makes changes in his life and initiates reforms until he becomes quite a good citizen and neighbor. In many ways he is an exemplary character. But he will not accept the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

This man is in danger of making a serious mistake. He may compare himself to some newly converted Christian and conclude that since the difference between them is not great, if God saves the Christian, God will surely save him also.

By a glance at the chart we easily recognize his mistake. He is overlooking the fact that the Christian is covered by the righteousness of Christ, which makes up for his deficiencies and fills the chart to its very top, making him perfect in Christ. The self-righteous man must get from his position below the "life-line" all the way to the top of the chart, with no help from Christ — an undertaking that is clearly impossible.

We cannot be saved by self righteousness. Only the righteousness of Christ will suffice. As an old-time preacher used to say, "You don't just quit drinking and think that saves you. You will just go to hell sober, that's all."

At enormous cost, heaven has provided a way of salvation for us through the sacrificial death of God's own Son. Any failure on our part to appreciate that sacrifice disqualifies us for the society of heaven. God's plan of salvation cannot be improved upon. Let us take advantage of it in full surrender and not try to construct a plan of our own.

As we look back at these four diagrams, we should be able to find our experience on one of them. They are all-inclusive. We could be on the first chart, ready to die in our sins, having never crossed the line from Death to Life. We could be on the Life side, having made our decision, and happily following our Lord toward His kingdom, benefitting by His righteousness every step of the way. We could be in a backslidden condition on the Death side of the chart again. Or we could be in the position of the self-righteous man, congratulating ourselves that we are not very bad but forgetting that only the righteousness of Christ can save us. Surely we

realize that the Life side of the chart is the only place to be. If you are not there, even as you read this, you can cross the line before you put this book down. It is done by making a decision which takes only a moment of time. It is done by saying to the Lord, "I see it, and I understand it, and I am going to do it right now. From now on You are my Lord, and I take orders from you. Let me know what you want me to do."

Now for a practical suggestion. We have learned from our dictionaries and from Ellen White that justification means *pardon* when the term is applied to God's dealing with man. Notice how simple and clear some "problem texts" become if we just read "pardon" or "forgive" where we see the word "justify."

Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be *pardoned* in his sight.... Romans 3:20

Being *pardoned* freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Romans 3:24

Therefore we conclude that a man is *pardoned* by faith without the deeds of the law. Romans 3:28

Seeing it is one God, which shall *pardon* the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. Romans 3:30

For if Abraham were *pardoned* by works, he bath whereof to glory, but not before God. Romans 4:2

This principle may be applied throughout the writings of Paul with beneficial results whenever he uses the word "justify" to apply to God's dealings with sinful man. The other meaning of the word "justify," to show or prove that what someone is doing or has done is right and proper has no application here. What sinful man is doing is by no means right and proper, and it cannot, by any means, be shown to be so. Paul does use the word in this sense in Romans 3:4, which applies to God, not man.

The purpose of this justification — this pardoning — is defined by Paul as:

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, that walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. Romans 8:4

Ellen White adds that

. . . forgiveness has a broader meaning than many suppose. . . God's forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness *for* sin, but reclaiming *from* sin. (Emphasis hers.) *Mount of Blessings*, page 114

The religion of Christ means more than the forgiveness of sins; it means taking away our sins, and filling the vacuum with the graces of the Holy Spirit . . . When Christ reigns in the soul, there is purity, freedom from sin. *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 419-20

Is this a teaching of *Perfectionism*? By no means. The doctrinal error of perfectionism, whenever it has appeared in church history, has rested like a three-legged stool on three principles:

1. Character perfection through the power of God is possible.
2. This perfection can happen in a moment of time, instant sanctification.
3. When it happens to a Christian he will be aware of it and will be able to testify to others that he has become sinless.

Some perfectionists held that this sinless condition could not be lost; others did not.

Two "spin-offs" of the doctrine were these:

1. *The Doctrine of the Simplicity of Moral Action*. According to this theory every act of life, large or small, is in itself either totally sinless or totally sinful, and we, while performing any act of life, large or small, are likewise either totally sinless or totally sinful. Thus the Christian moves back across the line to the

"Death" side at the moment he makes any slight mistake in his Christian life. He has no security in Christ, and no righteousness of Christ making up for his deficiencies. The harshness of this grim doctrine was countered by the development of

2. *The Doctrine of the Assured Providence of God.* According to this theory, God will never let any sinning Christian die without giving him time to repent.

Of all these ideas, Seventh-day Adventists accept only the first, that it is possible by the power of God to overcome temptation and live victorious Christian lives. All of the rest we dismiss as human inventions that are not in harmony with either the Scriptures or the Spirit of Prophecy. Hence, to describe our faith as *perfectionism* would be a very inaccurate use of the term.

We have seen that the Christian receives power from God by faith. Just how is this power transmitted to us? Primarily through God's Word, the Scriptures.

For the Word of God is quick (living) and powerful. . . Hebrews
4:12

Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth. John 17:17

The Life of Christ that gives life to the world is in His Word.
Desire of Ages, page 390.

The Word of God, the truth, is the channel through which the Lord
manifests His spirit and power. *Acts of the Apostles*, page 520.

We achieve a steady growth in grace by a regular and systematic study of the Word of God, accompanied, of course, by prayer. In this reading we not only gain knowledge, we also receive power. And it is well to have a reserve of power on hand that we can use in emergencies created by particular efforts of the devil to tempt us in various ways.

There are few problems more troublesome to young Christians, and to some older Christians, than the problem of sexual tensions. Yet these tensions can be coped with adequately by a proper use of Scripture. David writes:

Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against
thee. Psalms 119:11

We cannot describe the Word of God as hidden in our hearts if we have to read it out of a book, even a good book like the Bible. It has to be *memorized*. When Satan tempted Christ, He did not say, "Just wait a minute, Satan, and I will read you some verses from the scroll of Isaiah." Christ met Satan with Scriptures that He had *memorized*. They were in His heart.

Must we memorize the entire Bible? No. The Bible is so loaded with power that a single chapter will serve nicely. Just choose a chapter that you enjoy. The same power of God is in all of the chapters.

Then when you are troubled by sexual tensions, or other assaults by Satan, as all normal men and women are at times, just recite the chapter. *Your tensions will disappear*, and you will be victorious. Try it. It works. You will be experiencing Righteousness by Faith.

Righteousness by Faith is not a mystery. It is not difficult to understand, to practice, or to experience. It is right doing by means of power received from God. It begins with the righteousness of God *upon* us, justification. It continues with the righteousness of God *unto* us, sanctification. The transmission of power is through our reading and studying God's Holy Word, the Bible.

After the Bible, we would recommend the book *Christ's Object Lessons* by Ellen White. Just as *The Desire of Ages* is her position paper regarding the nature and work of our Lord Jesus Christ, *even* so the smaller book, *Christ's Object Lessons*, is her position paper on the Doctrine of Righteousness by Faith. Anyone who masters the contents of this little book will be secure against misinterpretations or distortions of the doctrine.

And while you are in the Adventist Book Center getting your copy of *Christ's Object Lessons*, why not look over the entire library of Ellen White's writings? You could have them all for the price of a piece of furniture, and the benefits would be greater. If necessary, buy them one volume at a time until you have

secured them all. At this period in the world's history we can hardly make a better investment.