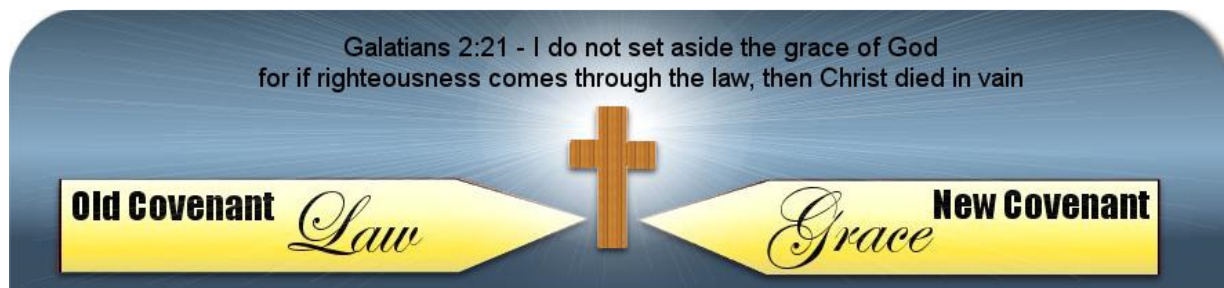


Why God Sees You as Completely Blameless



www.NewCovenantGrace.com

Contents

Introduction.....	3
Feeling Good Enough for God.....	4
What is Disobedience?.....	7
The Spirit.....	10
The Soul.....	13
The Body.....	15

Introduction

Nearly every believer can testify to the fact that at some point in their life, they have suffered from negative thoughts due to not feeling good enough for God. We feel this way because we connect our feelings of righteousness to how well we behave or perform.

When we've had a bad day and made some mistakes, we may sometimes not feel bold enough to openly talk to God. On other days when we've morally had a better day, we feel like God approves of us again, and that we can approach Him with boldness again.

These kinds of fluctuations in our relationship with God can often lead to anxiety, insecurities and condemnation.

But surely there has to be a better way? Surely if Christ paid for 100% of our sins at the cross, there has to be a way of seeing ourselves in the same way God sees us?

Yes there is.

It all boils down to understanding what happened to us when we became born-again. In the following chapters we will be looking at the Spirit, Soul and Body and how they are affected during the process of becoming born-again.

We will also be looking at the definition of "Disobedience", and how it is commonly misunderstood to be something that is connected to our *actions*, when actually, it isn't.

Feeling Good Enough for God

Have you ever gotten stuck on the endless treadmill of being performance driven, always feeling that you're not feeling good enough for God? Or if you could just stop doing that one sin, then you would feel "right" with God again? Maybe you feel you haven't been praying enough or reading your Bible enough, and you feel guilty. Even though you still pray from time to time, you feel that you can't really ask God for anything, because you have not done enough to earn anything from Him. When you kneel down to pray there is only that overwhelming sense of guilt, and lack of confidence.

Well, it was the same for people in the Old Testament. Priests continually had to offer sacrifices for the sins of the people, they were reminded and lived conscious of their sins and mistakes year after year. The Law and 10 Commandments demanded a perfect righteousness from God's people; they had to obey the laws 100% of the time. But people always sin, so these offers had to be made time and time again:

For the law (having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things) can never with these same sacrifices (which they offer continually year by year) make those who approach perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. 4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins. (Heb 10:1-3 NKJV)

However, the purpose of the law was not to give us a standard of morality to try and measure up to. The law was given to show us how sinful we are:

Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. (Rom 3:20 NKJV)

The Purpose of the Law

The law showed us what sin was!! The purpose of the law was to show us that we needed a Saviour. And once we came into Christ (the Savior), we were freed from the law.

What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; (Gal 3:19 NKJV)

Thus we can see that when the Seed (Jesus) came, and once we came into Christ, we died to the law.

But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. (Gal 4:4-5 NKJV)

Thus once we became sons (and daughters) of God, we died to the law.

Rom 7:4 Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another - to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God. (Rom 7:4 NKJV)

No Condemnation

Because we are now children of God, free from the condemnation of the law, we do not have to live feeling condemned anymore.

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus... (Rom 8:1 NKJV)

God does not want us to live conscious of our sins and mistakes. He wants us to be conscious of our salvation, conscious of the perfect work He did in us! Our spirits now have the same virtue and righteousness as Jesus Christ:

Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. (1 John 4:17 NKJV)

This verse says that just as Jesus is right now, this very moment, so are we right now in this world!! By method of deduction we can clearly see our bodies have not been glorified yet, and our souls (minds) have not been fully renewed yet. Thus this passage is talking about our spirits, having been perfected, made righteous just like Jesus. Read the verse again, especially the last part, it says we are just like Jesus.

Boldly Approach the Throne of Grace

We can now come boldly before God, anytime day or night!! We can come boldly before the throne of grace whether we “feel” good enough or not, because we are conscious of what Jesus did on our behalf.

Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. (Heb 10:19-22 NKJV)

Whenever we don't feel good enough to pray, when we're not feeling good enough for God, or when the enemy tries to put the Law with its condemnation on us, we need to remind him that we have died to the law, and that we are now alive to God, alive to a loving Father that has saved us, forgiven us all our sins past present and future, and sees us not

only as if we had never sinned, but as if we have obeyed all the laws our entire life, because Jesus did it on our behalf!

What is Disobedience?

The answer to this question might surprise many. Most people will say: “Disobedience is doing what God told us *not* to do”. Such a response is formulated by trying to relate to God through the law, based on their own level of compliance to the requirements of the 10 Commandments. This will include things like lying, stealing, envy, etc. Some will also say that disobedience is neglecting to do those things which God *did* command us to do. This will include doing good works like giving to the poor, loving our neighbors as ourselves, tithing, etc. However all these things are a part of the Old Covenant Law. Yes, even the commandment to “love the Lord your God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself” was a quote from an Old Testament Law (Deut 6:5), which has also been entirely fulfilled in Christ. However there is nothing wrong with doing these things, as long as they don’t form the basis of how we relate to God. Believers should trust in the finished work of the cross, not in their own performance.

As born again believers we know that we have been redeemed from the curse that comes from disobedience to these laws:

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us. (Gal 3:13 NKJV)

The law with its requirements that stood opposed to us has been cancelled so that we can be free to love God and live for Him without the fear of judgment:

...having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. (Col 2:14 NKJV)

If there still exists in us any fear of judgment, we have not been made perfect in love yet:

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. (1 John 4:18 NKJV)

The full wrath and judgment for sin was poured out on Jesus, and God took an oath in Isaiah 54 never to rebuke us or ever be angry with us ever again:

“For this is like the waters of Noah to Me; For as I have sworn that the waters of Noah would no longer cover the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be angry with you, nor rebuke you. (Isa 54:9 NKJV)

Because the law with its requirements was nailed to the cross with Jesus, there is essentially no more law to break anymore.

...because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression. (Rom 4:15 NKJV, emphasis added)

So what is disobedience then? The following verses are a key:

⁷ Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient “The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone,”⁸ and “A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense.” They [unbelievers] stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. (1 Pet 2:7-8 NKJV, annotations and emphasis added)

Verse 7 contrasts two different groups of people very distinctly: Those who believe and those who are *disobedient*. This tells us that those who don't believe are disobedient. The second half of verse 8 also says that they stumble because they are disobedient *to the Word*. What or who is the Word? The Word is Jesus:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. (John 1:1 & 3 NKJV, emphasis added)

The Word is a person and anybody that doesn't believe in Him stumbles over the stumbling stone and is called “disobedient”. Verse 7 also says that to those who believe, He is *precious*. This is because He becomes the author of their salvation, their savior and their brother and they are adopted into His family. What a privilege!

Let's look at another example:

And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience. (Eph 2:1-2 NKJV, emphasis added)

This passage says that we *were* once dead towards God when we still had an old sinful nature, the same nature that still lives on in those who refuse to accept Jesus. They are called the “sons of disobedience”. Verse two says we “once walked according to the course of this world”, which implies we do so no longer.

It's pretty clear from these two verses that being disobedient doesn't really have a lot to do with our deeds. *Being disobedient means not to be saved*. Now with this revelation in mind, let's read these last two verses again. Go on, read them again!

Did the light suddenly go on there? It's amazing how the Holy Spirit illuminates those dark corridors in our minds one by one as we give ourselves to studying God's Word.

The moment we accepted Jesus' perfect sacrifice as the full atonement for our sin, all His obedience was credited to us as a free gift, making us 100% righteous and acceptable to God. Our salvation is now just as secure as Jesus Himself, because we are *in Christ*.

But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God - and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. (1 Cor 1:30 NKJV, emphasis added)

Because we are now *in* Christ and He lives *in* us, the Father sees His Sons when He looks at us: perfect and without blemish. The only way we could ever lose our right standing with God is if Jesus were to backslide, which of course could never happen.

The Spirit

One of the biggest problems that Christians have in understanding how we can be completely righteous (because we don't always "feel" righteous), is the principle of spirit, soul and body. The Bible clearly says we have all three:

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thes 5:23 NKJV)

We *are* a spirit, we *have* a soul, and we live *in* a body. This is very contrary to the worldly belief that we only have a body and mind (remember that mind = soul). Let's briefly look at each one.

The Spirit

When we are born again, our spirit becomes alive to God. Previously our spirit was in a dormant, dead state towards God, but alive to sin (we were *in* sin):

...even when we were dead in trespasses, [He] made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved). (Eph 2: 5 NKJV, annotations added)

But then when we put our faith in Jesus, this old sinful nature was crucified (and buried) with Christ. The Bible calls this sinful nature the "old man":

...knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. (Rom 6:6 NKJV, emphasis added)

For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (Col 3:3 NKJV)

This last verse says "*you*" died and through the process of elimination we should easily be able to figure out which part of us it's talking about. Ask yourself: "Did my body die?" The answer of course is "No" because you are still very much alive, reading this book. "Did my soul die?" Again the answer is "No" because at this very moment you are processing the thoughts of what you are reading in this book with your mind, also called your "soul" or "intellect". So since neither the body nor the soul has died, this of course only leaves us with the spirit - this verse is talking about the old sinful spirit man.

Alive to God

The moment we become born again, our spirit becomes alive to God:

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him⁹ knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more.¹⁰ For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.¹¹ Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom 6:8-11 NKJV)

In verse 11 the word “reckon” actually means “to consider”. Compare this paraphrased version of verses 9 to 11 with the verses above:

Verse 9: We know that Christ was raised from the dead and that He cannot die again. Verse 10: He died once on behalf of the whole of mankind, but now He is eternally alive to God. Verse 11: *In the same manner as Christ, consider yourself also to be dead to sin, because just like Christ you are dead to sin! And just like Christ is now alive to God, consider yourself also to be alive to God!*

Created Perfectly in the Image of God!

And here is the most amazing part: At the moment of salvation our born again spirit is created just as righteous as Jesus, perfectly holy and glorious and has the very nature of Jesus Christ Himself! The Father made Jesus to be sin in our place so we could receive His righteousness as a free gift!

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Cor 5:21 NKJV)

Our born again spirit is sometimes also called the “new man” or “inward man”. The last part of Ephesians 4 talks about our behavior towards other people and verse 24 says that just as our inner man *has already been* created according to the very image of Jesus, we should now also let our actions reflect this change that has occurred inside us:

...and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. (Eph 4:24 NKJV, emphasis added)

And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. (Col 3:10 NKJV, emphasis added)

This born again spirit man inside us can never change; it is made righteous forever! It is actually “fused” together with the Holy Spirit Himself!

But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. (1 Cor 6:17 NKJV)

This means that if we were ever able to corrupt *our* spirit, we would also be able to corrupt the Holy Spirit because we have been joined to Him and they are one Spirit. And of course we know this can never happen. It is a one way stream: The Holy Spirit (or our born again

Spirit) can never be manipulated negatively, it can only emanate goodness. This goodness can however be choked-up, which is called “quenching” the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19).

The Soul

This is the realm of the psyche and includes the mind, will, intellect, personality and emotions. This part does not instantly change when we are born again. Yes we've now made a choice for Christ to follow Him and serve Him, but this part of us still has the old thought patterns and habits of our BC (before Christ) days. These habits may have been formed out of mere self-preservation instincts, or by us yielding our members to the lustful desires of our old sinful nature.

Even though we don't want to sin anymore, we still find that our behavior does not always line up with what we *want* to do. This is what Paul talks about in Romans 7:

For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. (Rom 7:15, 20, 22-23 NKJV)

Our soul / mind is the part of us that we spend the rest of our life renewing. We need to train our mind to agree with what already happened in our spirit. How do we do this? Well, truth doesn't just automatically jump out at us while we sit and do nothing. Jesus said that "the truth will set you free", but it is only the truth that we *know* that will set us free. By devoting quality time to God, studying the word, praying, spending time with fellow believers, etc. we get to behold the beauty of our Father and have our minds washed with truth.

Renew Your Mind!

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (Rom 12:2 NKJV)

A desire for intimacy will prompt us into *wanting* to do these things. The Spirit of God inside us cries out to the Father, deep calling to deep, wanting to romance and woo us. The above list of things to do is not a recipe or a list of "have to's". The need to study the word, pray, etc. will manifest itself as a desire in us, the mighty Holy Spirit expressing His desire to lead us into all truth (John 16:13).

This is also why we are told to set our minds on the things above (Colossians 3:2), because the more we think God's thoughts, the faster our minds will be transformed. As

our old sinful thought patterns begin to starve, the mind will come more and more into agreement with our born again spirit.

For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are (being) sanctified. (Heb 10:14 NKJV, annotations added)

The Body

When Jesus died, He redeemed us through His blood. At that moment the believer's spirit becomes alive towards God and their body a temple of the Holy Spirit.

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Cor 6:19-20 NKJV)

Our body will follow either the spirit or the mind, depending which one we give control to. If we give our mind control (and our mind has not yet been renewed), we are walking according the flesh and the fruit of this is death - death in the form of us reaping the results of our ungodly actions.

What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! (Rom 6:21 NKJV)

Note that even though we might sometimes reap earthly consequences for our actions, God will never punish us for our mistakes since *all* mankind's sin was punished in the body of Christ.

But now, since we have been made alive *in* the spirit (born again), let us walk according to the spirit! If our old sinful nature has been crucified with Christ, why would we still want to live according to it? As our mind becomes more and more renewed, our body and mind / soul will also walk more and more in line with what has already happened in our spirit, becoming more committed to the righteous purposes of God.

Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness. (Rom 6:19 NKJV)

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. (Gal 5:16-17 NKJV)

Remember that a believer *is* a spirit; they *have* a soul and *live* in a body. Their spirit is completely righteous and holy and since the believer *is* a spirit, the actual person has been made the righteousness of God! It's now simply a matter of getting our mind and body to line up with this truth.