

# THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

**2 Peter 1:2-4**  
**Lesson #2**  
**Positional Truth**  
**09/19/2021**

**What must you do to be right with God?**

God simply asks that you be true to yourself as a human being

**bearing God's Image.**



1

Paul's summation of much of Jesus' teaching -

**"Humanity has a problem!"**

*Romans 3:23*

"For all have sinned and fall short of the **glory of God.**"

**"Christ is God's solution!"**

*2 Corinthians 4:4*

"the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the **image of God.**"

2

## 2 Peter

**Finding our way in a Confused World**

Salutation	Three aspects of staying on track.		
Faith and the faith	Cultivate a mature faith in sync with Scripture.	Count the cost of worldly alternatives.	Clarify true and false hope.
1:1-4	1:5-15 1:16-21	2:1-22	3:1-18

Holiness

Heresy

Hope

- **Faith (verb)** unites us "in Christ" who is "the Image of God".
- **Faith (noun)** is the message of God's Image being fully restored in humans.

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### 2 Peter 1

"<sup>1</sup> Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have **received a faith** of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:"

**Faith (VERB)** - the act of believing.

**Faith (NOUN)** - the message believed.

**What message did we RECEIVE?**

"<sup>2</sup> **Grace and peace** be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, <sup>3</sup> for His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to **life and godliness**, through the **true knowledge of Him** who called us by His own **glory and excellence** (virtue). <sup>4</sup> For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become **partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world on account of lust."

4

**Genesis 1-3 reveals humanities purpose and problem.**

*Genesis 1:26*

"Let Us make man **in Our image**, according to **Our likeness**; and let them rule."

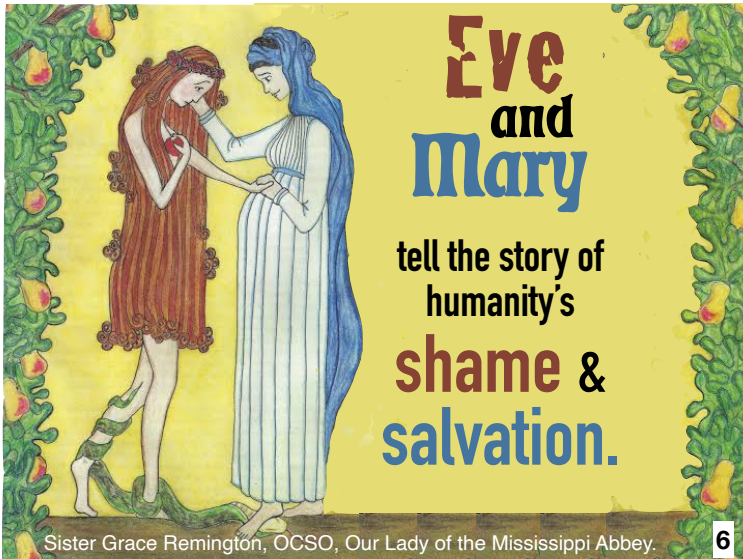
*Romans 1:21*

"For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but **they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.**"

*1 Corinthians 15:45*

"The first man, Adam, became a living soul. The **last Adam** (Jesus) became a life-giving spirit."

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### 2 Peter 1

“3 for **His divine power** has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. 4 Through these (**His nature - power, glory, and virtue**) He has granted to us His precious and magnificent **promises**, so that by them you may become **partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world on account of lust.”

**God calls us BY His nature,  
TO partake of His nature,  
as promised in the O.T.  
and realized in Christ.**

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## What changes

*when a person becomes a Christian?*

- ✓ **Some things may change immediately, completely, and irrevocably.** (our position in Christ, our direction in life)
- ✓ **Some things may not change at all.** (personality, physical body, formative circumstances, etc.)
- ✓ **Some things may change gradually and incompletely.** (wisdom, spiritual maturity, moral perfection, character, etc.)

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### 2 Peter 1

“4 Through these (**His nature**) He **has granted** (vs 3) to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you **may become** partakers of the divine nature, **having escaped** the corruption that is in the world on account of lust.”

*past tense*

*future tense*

We have escaped the corrupt domain of the world being “in Christ”

but have yet to partake of what it means to have Christ living his life through us.



How can we be declared holy

while we still sin?

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## Illustration: The Corinthian church

### 1 Corinthians 1:2

“to the church of God which is **sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints** by calling, with all who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:”

### 1 Corinthians 3:3

“for you are **still fleshly**. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not **walking like mere men**?”

### Romans 4:5

“But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who **justifies the ungodly**, his faith is reckoned as righteousness,”

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## Three stumbling blocks to Gospel truths

1. Confusing the New and Old covenants

2. Confusing the work of Christ and the work of the Spirit

3. Confusing positional holiness through the Imputed righteousness by faith and practiced holiness through works of love



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*The O.C. and N.C. differ with respect to how to acquire the virtue that God's Image demands.*

**Old Covenant**

Orthopraxy

**Law**

**“Do”**

**New Covenant**

Orthodoxy

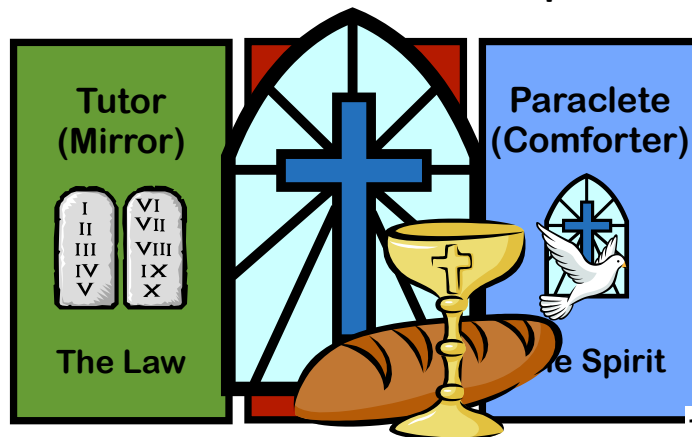
**Faith**

**“Done”**



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**Don't confuse the ministries of the Law, Jesus, and the Spirit.**



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## Holiness

**Positional**

**Practiced**

**Jesus**



Faith in Christ's work

We “in Christ”

**Holy Spirit**



Works of faith through love

“Christ in us”

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“Luther was converted upon understanding that Romans 1:17, *“He who through faith is righteous shall live.”* was speaking of faith “as” righteousness rather than “producing” righteousness.”

Martin Luther



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Luther made a distinction between:

“active righteousness”

and

“passive righteousness”.

Martin Luther



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**Our position  
“in Christ”**

is about the finished work of Christ **FOR** us through God's **GRACE**

and the imputed virtue of Christ **TO** us through our **FAITH** (baptism).

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*Genesis 15:6*

"Then he believed in the Lord;  
and He reckoned it to him as righteousness."

## Imputation

- The **attribution of a value** to something that ordinarily does not have that value.
- To "consider" or "see as" so. (It is **reckoned as truth** rather than a sensate experience).

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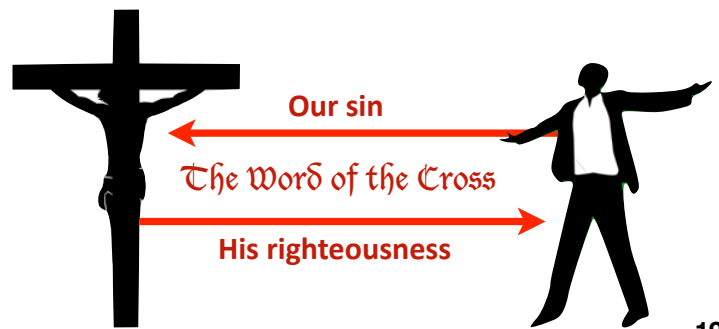
## The great exchange

*2 Corinthians 5:21*

"He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf,



so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."



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The temple priest was ceremonially sanctified with water before he performed his sacred duties.



**This had to do with his official position not his personal virtue.**

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## Water baptism is your positional washing as a believer priest.

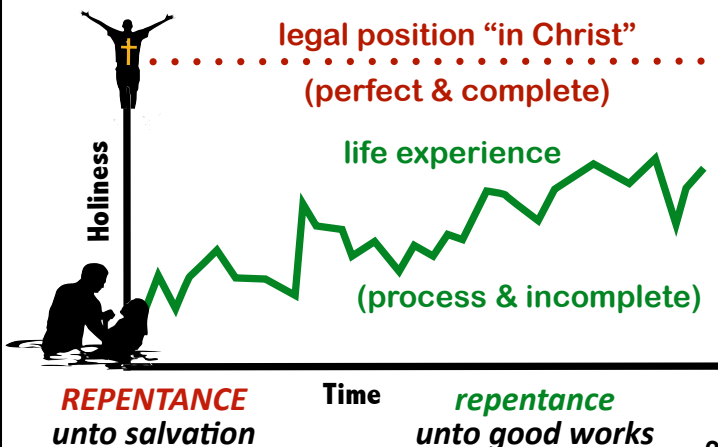
"... baptism now saves you, not the washing of the filth of the flesh but the answer of a good conscience toward God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ."



*1 Peter 3:21*

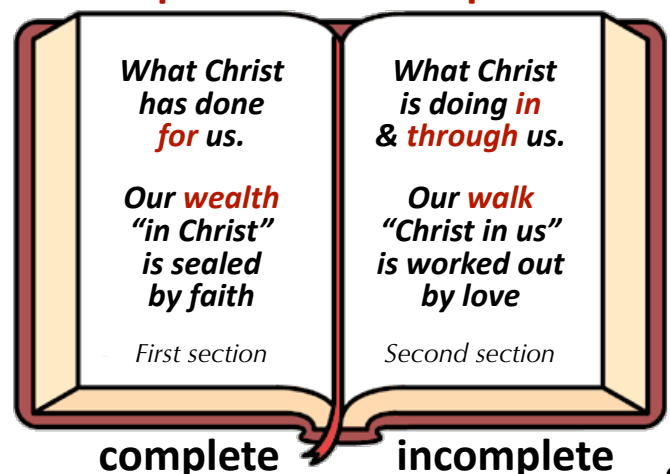
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## The two aspects of holiness



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## The pattern of N.T. Epistles



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## Positional righteousness

- ✓ It is a declaration & non-experiential.
- ✓ It is not progressive.
- ✓ It is not related to human merit.
- ✓ It is not related to moral reform.
- ✓ It fully satisfies the demands of a perfectly holy God.
- ✓ **It must be learned through teaching & applied by faith.**

**Christ's work FOR us**

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## Why Positional truth is important

- ✓ It is **clearly taught** in the Old and New Testaments.
- ✓ It is at the **heart** of the Gospel.
- ✓ It puts the attention on what God **has done in Christ** not on our merit / virtue.
- ✓ It grounds our relationship in what is **finished** (secure) not in our feelings or circumstances.



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## Our position "in Christ" frees us from fear.

*Romans 7-8*

"<sup>24</sup> Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? <sup>25</sup> Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! . . . <sup>1</sup> There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. . . . <sup>3</sup> For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, **God did; sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin,** He condemned sin in the flesh,"

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## Without Positional truth

- ✓ Our relationship with Christ is unsettled.
- ✓ Christians can have little assurance.
- ✓ Christianity is all about me and my life.
- ✓ Christians live in constant fear of failure.
- ✓ The Old Covenant is still operational.
- ✓ Legalism and judging others is encouraged.
- ✓ The focus of the faith becomes our works.

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*No one is forced to receive Christ  
but all must bear God's image  
to be reconciled to Him!*

1. We are all created in the **image of God** for a purpose of bearing His virtue.
2. We are responsible to **be true to ourselves** as image bearers.
3. We are **frustrated** by our brokenness and that of the world.
4. Jesus was sent as a gift of grace to bear our shame on the cross and **impute** His moral virtue to us by faith.
5. Many have received God's gift by **faith** so as to stand before God as a perfect image bearer in Christ.
6. Others are free to stand before God on **their own merit**.
7. God will be perfectly **fair** in His judgment of both.

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"Holiness is not the way to Christ; Christ is the way to holiness.  
**Better still,  
Christ is our  
holiness.**"

Charles Spurgeon



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