

Sermon on Righteousness presented at the Ottawa, Kansas,  
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"Keeping the Commandments," #5, May 1889.

2 Corinthians 5:17. We have seen how we are brought into Christ and how this says if any man is brought into Christ he is a new creature. Gal. 6:15; 5:6, nothing avails but this and faith that works by love of God, being made a new creature by faith. Romans 5:1,2,5; 1 John 5:3--then keeping the commandments comes in after we are new creatures, so then we must be made good, be made righteous, before we can do good or do righteousness; 1 Corinthians 7:19--that is the aim set before us in Christ Jesus. Ephesians 2:8-10. We are created unto good works; made new creatures in him, his righteousness counting for our unrighteousness. The good works God's creatures are created in Christ to do are the good works we could not do before. So a new creature will aim constantly to keep the commandments. James 2:1, 9. We do not have the faith of Christ with the transgression of the law. Christ did not come to set us free for that, because if we turn from a single point of the law our faith will not avail. But our intent is accepted and ignorant sins are forgiven, yet willful refusal to accept points of truth presented will cause us to lose all the righteousness we ever had. This explains the fast growing evil in the popular churches of today. p. 1, Para. 2, [KANSAS5].

Years ago the churches were religious--even when the third angel's message started they were accepted of God but when they refused to comply with the requirements of the message, then they lost all the righteousness they had and have had to invent all manner of means by which to keep the congregations together, by entertainments. This is the philosophy of the degeneration of the churches. James 2:14. No more does faith profit unless it is kept alive by these works. God has provided, Num. 18, let us show our faith by our works. Faith is the anchor that holds the craft in the right place to work and the storms beat us nearer home. Verses 21, 23. Abraham was counted righteous when he believed and without works, the other righteousness came in twenty-five years after, so he was not counted righteous by works, that scripture was spoken when he believed and more than twenty-five years after James says the scripture was

fulfilled. If he had refused to offer Isaac, his former righteousness would have disappeared, so the obedience of his faith completed his righteousness that he had by faith. p. 1, Para. 3, [KANSAS5].

Then our keeping of the commandments is not to become righteous, but because we are righteous. Romans 8:26 shows that we can not even pray aright, but the spirit does it for us, so our prayers are acceptable only through the intercession of Christ and the merits of his blood. Rev. 8:3, 4. Here is the intercession in the sanctuary making intercession for us and God looks upon Christ, his wounds and his sacrifice and accepts them. Christ was perfect before he came to earth, and his absence makes our prayers acceptable, God imputing his prayer for us to us. How is his righteousness imputed to us? Are our acts righteous as far as they go and is his righteousness applied to finish out the work? No. Christ's righteousness starts at the beginning and makes the action what it ought to be. Romans 1:16. Is not our faith greater than when we came here? Do we not see more of his righteousness than we did? How is it we have more faith and see more of his righteousness? Why our faith has grown. So it is day by day. We came daily for greater supply of faith. And we finally have so much of Christ's divine nature in us that we can draw the bow strongly enough to hit the mark, and then we will be keeping the commandments of God. Then is it not Christ's work from the beginning and all his divine power? Where, then, do our works come in? Nowhere. Why then do we strive so hard to keep the commandments, if it avails not? It is only by faith in Christ that we can say we are Christians. p. 1, Para. 4, [KANSAS5].

It is only through being one with him that we can be Christians, and only through Christ within us that we keep the commandments--it being all by faith in Christ that we do and say these things. When the day comes that we actually keep the commandments of God, we will never die, because keeping the commandments is righteousness, and righteousness and life are inseparable--so, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God and faith of Jesus," and what is the result? These people are translated. Life, then, and keeping the commandments go together. If we die now, Christ's righteousness will be imputed to us and we will be raised, but those who live to the end are made sinless before he comes, having so much of Christ's being in them that they "hit the mark" every time, and stand

blameless without an intercessor, because Christ leaves the sanctuary sometime before he comes to earth. Now some say, "I will live better; I will try to build myself up into that place where God can accept me." If a child tries to do something to build up himself that you may think more of him, and falls, you say it was selfishness and pride, and serves him right; but if a child tries to do something simply to please you, even though bunglingly done, you commend him and praise him. So with us, if we strive to please our God, no matter how bunglingly we do it, he is so glad to put Christ's righteousness upon us and all heaven rejoices over it. How often a child tries to help mother and she lets it go on, although mother has to do it all over again--yet she delights in the effort of the child to please her. Now like as a father pitieth his children so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. p. 2, Para. 1, [KANSAS5].

So then we can say with David: "I delight to do thy law, oh, my God." Why? Because the love of God was shed abroad in his heart. Now let me read a few texts about pleasing God: Hebrews 11:6. The aim of faith is to please God, because he is so good. Romans 8:8. Again 2 Cor. 5:14. The love of Christ draws us and we get that love through faith. But can we love God if we cannot keep the commandments of God? No. We can do neither until we become new creatures. 1 John 3:21-22. Now let us read Col. 1:9-10. We should be able to walk pleasingly before him. 1 Thess. 4:1. This then is the root and motive in keeping the commandments--to please God, and not to make ourselves righteous. God makes and keeps us righteous and then we keep the commandment to please God who has done so much for us. As then it is the power of Christ through which we keep the commandments now, and it will be his power through which we shall live forever in the new earth. His name to us is what? Jeremiah says it is "the Lord our Righteousness." Jer. 23:5-6. p. 2, Para. 2, [KANSAS5].