

## Two Inseparable Aspects of Salvation

God's work of salvation includes two inseparable aspects: justification and sanctification. Our problem is two-fold; we are guilty and defiled. In justification, God declares the believer 'righteous' and 'not guilty' because of the obedience of Christ. In sanctification, the Holy Spirit enables the believer to overcome his sinful tendencies and to live a pure life. In justification, the believer is *declared* righteous. In sanctification, the believer is *made* righteous. Pardon and spiritual restoration are the two sides of the priceless gem of salvation.

Thus, the Bible teaches that it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us" (Titus 3:5). They are strangers to grace who presume to be saved by personal good deeds. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," is the shout of praise coming from the heart of those who have experienced grace. They are fully aware that they do not merit God's favour. They know that Another, Christ, has obtained their new status on their behalf. Justification is freely given to them.

But that is only a partial story. Though God saves "not by works of righteousness," He saves in order to train his people to live righteous and holy lives. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:11,12). That is the other half of the story: sanctification, learning to become holy, as He is holy.

In my childhood I had the mistaken idea that God only accepts me if I did enough good works to balance out my sins. Thank God, now I realize that he receives me in his loving arms not because I deserve His goodness but because of what Christ did for me on the cross. Now I also find in my heart the overwhelming desire to be like Christ, my Saviour, in the beauty of His holiness.