

RIGHTEOUSNESS SERIES

THE REVELATION OF CHRIST

In the last message, we spoke about the transformation of Jesus Christ in our lives. Every problem in our lives that we cannot overcome is a problem of the lack of revelation of Christ. On the New Year's day, many people make resolutions to try to change their lives. They try change to themselves through their will power, their intellect, and all kinds of methods. The bible reveals that we are like leopards with spots and no leopard can change its spots. And no one can change himself or herself. We can influence one another and be influenced by different factors to a certain extend. But real heartfelt genuine transformation only comes from God. And one revelation from Him is enough to change us. We showed that even though we accepted Jesus in our life as personal Lord and Savior yet the transformation in our life is continuous. It is not finished yet.

In the book of Rom. 8:28-30 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. No matter what has happened in your life, no matter what situation you face, the bible says all things work together for good to those who love Him and to those who are called according to His purpose. Now it did not say that all things work for good to everyone. It says that all things work for good only to those who love Him and who are called according to His purpose. And that's

inclusive of every situation in your life good and bad things that you can control, things to come. That is a powerful promise.

Before we came to know God or have just begun to know God, things may have happened beyond our control. If you keep your heart full of love for God and do your best to live the will of God in accordance with your knowledge and with your conscience things will always work out for good. All we have to do is to make sure that we love God. We have to make sure that we do our best in walking according to His call and His will. We may make mistakes here and there but if you love God, it will always end well. Isn't it wonderful? To know that your ending is a good ending. To know that when you conclude your life's story that it will be a happy ending before He says, "Time's up. Your life has come to its end." It won't be a sad or a tragic ending. Thank God that if your heart is full of love for God you will always have a good ending. That is why the bible says surely goodness and mercy follow those who keep the Lord as their Shepherd. The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want and one of the promises is surely goodness and mercy shall follow you all the days of your life.

Lets read on verse 29 *For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called, whom He called, these He also justified, and whom He justified, these He also glorified.*

Basically, in verse 29, whether you are called to the five-fold ministry or you are called to the business world or to the professional world or to any secular vocation that God has for you, that's all with one purpose - that you would become more Christ like.

Look at it in verse 29 *we are predestined to be conformed to His image.* We are predestined to be like Jesus. We are called, justified, glorified in Him and predestined to be in His very image. That is the call that God has for every human being. He wants all of us to take on the image of Christ Jesus. That means if God calls you to be a businessman remember your main goal is not just

earning money and bringing finances to the kingdom of God. That is part of your call. Not just that. Those are some of the things that you do. But what you do and what you are need to be co-related. He wants us to be Christ like. So whatever we are called to be - apostle, evangelist, pastor, prophet, teacher, or businessman or schoolteacher, or whatever circumstances surround you – whether easy or not so easy, you must see that the main goal is to become more Christ like. And part of the process is by allowing the love of God to fill us.

Many people ask that question, “Pastor, what is the will of God for my life?” The will of God for your life is to be like Jesus. That is the No. 1 goal. And if right now you don’t know some of the detailed practical things about what God’s will is for your life just walk in whatever will you already know. Walk in the most Christ like manner you know how. And it will always end up in the fullness of His will.

Now in Rom. 8, it brings to us what we call a process. Its not completed yet. Our transformation to be like Jesus is not completed yet. We are still being changed into the image. And from the way Paul writes it, that will be fully completed at His coming.

Turn to Col. 3:3-4 *For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.* We will appear with Him in glory. This is a powerful phrase about being Christ like.

Turn to I Jn. 4:17 *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.* As He is so are we in this world. All these verses talk about our union with Christ. How perfectly He wants us to be one with Him even on this earth in His very image. Now here is where the problem is. We could be at some point of transformation in our earthly life and Christ’s coming may take some years from now. We have Jesus in our hearts when we accepted Him as our Lord and Savior. But there is yet a long way for us to become like Jesus Christ. Quite often, either

ignorantly, foolishly or willfully, Christians have made mistakes. And in different ways, they have stumbled different people about what real Christianity is about. But in your life, you should never allow anyone to stumble you from walking with Jesus. Remember that your eyes must be on Jesus all the time. You follow after Jesus with all your heart, mind and soul.

So here on earth, we are on the way to transformation. Those of us who know Jesus Christ are at different points of transformation in our lives. We want to reach the full goal, when the whole church of Jesus Christ to be transformed in His image. Each one of us individually is conformed to His image.

Let us consider Paul's prayer for the church of Ephesus in Eph. 3:14 onwards. *For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you according to the riches of His glory to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height – to know the love of Christ.*

Now he is talking to Christians. He is not talking to people who do not know Jesus. He is writing this letter to the church of Ephesus. The church is made up of Christians who have been baptized in water, born again, baptized in the Spirit and received many different gifts and graces from God. Now Paul is telling them in his prayer that he is praying that God would strengthen their inner man; that Christ may abide or dwell in their hearts through faith; that they be grounded and rooted in love; that they may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height and to know the love of Christ.

So here is another interesting paradox. We have received Christ into our hearts and yet Christ continues to dwell in increasing measures in our life. We continue to have Christ dwelling in our hearts in different measures. This is an

area that we cannot try to understand with our finite minds. How can Christ be already in me and yet continue to come into me? I mean He is already in our hearts, how can He come and dwell again in us? We can also ask another paradoxical question - how can Jesus dwell in your heart and in my heart and in all believers' hearts at the same time? These are all things of the spirit realm. If you want to try to understand that paradox intellectually, meditate on God's omnipresence. The power of omnipresence is the ability to be in more than one place at the same time in the same power. So, it's the power of God's omnipresence.

There are three things that we cannot be like Jesus, omnipresence, omnipotent and omniscience. However, in all other areas Jesus does want us to conform to His image. We realize that although Jesus is in our hearts yet Paul is praying that Jesus may dwell even more in us. And theologically we have always said you accept Christ only once. But you continue to draw on His life and His Spirit into you until He is fully formed in you.

We have mentioned that every problem that we have in our life to correct it, to change it, only requires the revelation of Christ. One glimpse of Christ is enough to change a hardened sinner into a saint. We showed in the last message in the life of the apostle Paul. Before he was called to be an apostle, he was a cruel religious man who was persecuting the saints. Nothing changed him. But when Jesus appeared to him on the way to Damascus he was changed. Imagine if that appearance were continuous, he would be changed continually. And the key is how to have Jesus to be revealed in our hearts continually. I am not talking about having an open vision or spiritual vision. I am talking about the inner workings of Jesus' revelations in our hearts.

Turn to Gal. 4 the Galatians were having a problem. They were struggling in their Christian life. They were Gentile Christians who were struggling to keep the Jewish laws, customs and traditions because of some Jewish Christians' teachings, which Paul did not recommend. In trying to be good, they were not succeeding. They were becoming more and more miserable. And Paul knows about their problem and wrote the letter of Galatians to them. Galatia is a whole province and covers all the churches there.

He did not only deal with their problems, doubts, unbelief, struggles that they were facing, he also pointed out the mistakes that they have done and the things that they should know and do. An example is found in Gal. 3:1, *O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?*

Just more glimpses of that are in Gal. 5:15 *But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another.* Then he talks about the works of the flesh in verse 19 adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murder, drunkenness, revelries, and the like, all these things that he told them they should not practice. So there were many things, many problems the Galatians have faced to a certain extent. Primarily they kept falling back onto traditions and customs and struggling to be a Christian. And the root problem Paul said was that they forgot that Christian life is by grace and not by works. Just as salvation is by grace and not by works, in the similar way Christian life and Christian living is by grace and not by works. And you know what Paul said about them. In Gal. 5:4 he didn't mean that they lost their salvation but he means that they lost some essential truth of the Christian life. He says in Gal. 5:4 *You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law, you have fallen from grace.*

The song, "You are the vine I am the branches," is a quotation from Jn. 15:1-5. Jesus is the vine and we are the branches. We must abide in the vine. We are the branches and we must abide in the vine. And Paul was saying that spiritually the Galatians were not abiding in Christ anymore since they were abiding in their own works. See the phrase that he used, "you have become estranged from Christ." Part of his meaning means you have become a stranger to Jesus. Jesus is no more living in your heart. In a sense, He is there but He is no more allowed to live through you; you are living your own life.

Then his other statements *you who attempt to be justified by law, you*

have fallen from grace. We all use the word *fallen from grace* to mean lose salvation. But Paul uses it in a different way. He doesn't mean that they lost their salvation. He meant that they have lost their art of Christian living. I would rather call Christian living an art. Because art is something that you can define to a certain extent yet there are some things that you can never define. Christian living is not just 4, 5, 10, 20 principles and we have programmed these principles inside us like a robot. Christian living is not just that intellectual process. Now the intellectual process, renewal of the mind, is important. But it's an art. Worshiping God is an art. You can say well these are the good things to do. When we lift up our hands, the book of Psalms tells us it represents the evening sacrifice. When we dance unto the Lord, we are rejoicing in God. Jesus did say to do it in faith because in Lk. 6 Jesus tells us to rejoice when you are troubled and persecuted. You may receive teachings on worship but when it comes to actually worshiping, it is a different thing. Doing worship brings a greater understanding of worship.

It is just like when you learn to drive a car. You learn how to drive the car on first gear. If your car is on manual gears, you must press the clutch first then you change the gear from neutral to first gear, and so on. Every time you need to change to another gear, you must press the clutch first. But then everybody who drives a car knows that. After you have passed your driving test and secured your driving license, you start driving around in your car. At first, you were still unsteady but after awhile, you are at ease driving anywhere. You have to master the foundations and the basics before making driving an art. It is the same with learning music or learning to paint. You have to master the basic foundations before you can proceed to making it an art. Your peculiar artistry will be revealed in your driving, music or paintings. I notice one thing everybody drives the car the way their personality is. People who are jumpy tend to drive the car the same way. People who are very steady drive their cars very steadily.

Likewise, Christian living is an art. The Galatians were so concerned about pleasing God that they kept falling back on the Jewish laws and customs to make themselves right with God whereas God wanted them to look to Jesus and develop a relationship with Jesus. Regard Christian life as an art. We learn the principles but remember you don't reduce Jesus to a sort of principle. You don't reduce Jesus to 25 doctrinal statements. He is a person. You learn everything you

can but when you relate to Him, He is a person. And you know what Jesus wants. Jesus wants you to relate to Him as an art. Just as when you learn to play the piano, you learn all the elementary things. You may make some mistakes but you are trying to play a song. And you play your first song. It may not be the best song but you are learning the art. After some time, your playing goes beyond that and you move into the higher realms of music. Christian life is that manner. We can learn the principles of Christian living but when it comes to our relationship with Jesus, it develops into the finer art of relating and fellowshiping and communing with Him.

And here the Galatians were learning all these principles of trying to do this and that to please God. Even the Colossian Christians were guilty of that. They fell into the same fundamental errors that began to make Christian life miserable. They fail to realize that Christian life is an art and not an intellectual process. So Paul told the Galatians, "You have fallen from grace. You have pulled yourself away from Jesus to some sort of religiosity that Jesus had no part." And he told them that they must again return to Jesus. Now they don't need to be born again. They were born again once. But they need to understand how to relate to Him. And Paul in his compassion in Gal. 4:19 says *My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you.* Do you know what the root problem was? Christ was not fully formed in them yet.

The word *form* is a special Greek word here. It is not the normal Greek word for *form*. The normal Greek word for *form* is the word *plaso*. The word *plaso* is where we get the word *plasma* in English. The word *plaso* has been used in Rom. 9:20 and I Tim. 2:13. it means what it means - a real form. But here the word *form* in Gal. 4:19 until Christ is formed in you is the word *morphoo*. Another prefix is added to the word *morphoo* to make it *metamorphoo* and it is translated *transfigured* in Matt. 17 and Lk. 9. *Metamorphosis* is a process of transformation. When Jesus was on the top of the Mount of Olives praying, He was transfigured. His form was changed until it was brilliant and shiny. That's the word *morphoo*.

And if we bring that same usage into Gal. 4:19, we will see how the meaning is brought out clearly. *My little children for whom I labor in birth again*

until Christ is transfigured (or transformed) in you. See Christian life is allowing Jesus to live in us until He shines brightly in us. That's why it's an art. We learn about Jesus. We learn how to yield and we learn the principles of renewing our minds but basically, it is yielding to Jesus living in us.

Yielding to Jesus living in us is tied to righteousness and this is the gospel or good news about Jesus. The gospel is Jesus Himself. Not just His teachings although His teachings are part of the gospel. Rom. 1:16-17 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For it is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

There are two types of righteousness. One is the righteousness of the law, which humans try to get human righteousness. The other is the righteousness of God, which is a free gift from God. And the gospel is the revelation of that free gift. For thousands of years mankind has tried to be righteous. We try to be good. We try to be this and that and we all fail. And God says that He is now giving us His gift of righteousness that changes us. We cannot change by ourselves because no one can be righteous without God. Remember we have shown that even the Old Testament saints had a glimpse of the gift of righteousness. You name any famous saint in the Old Testament and they were what they were not because they were more fantastic than the rest of the people. They were what they were because they had a glimpse of the righteousness of God. Noah found grace in the eyes of God. Abraham found favor in the eyes of God. Joseph found favor in the eyes of God. They managed to have a glimpse of righteousness and therefore they were changed.

We have given some examples in the book of Romans. In the book of Romans, Paul talks about the righteousness that is our faith versus the righteousness of humans. Rom. 4:2-3 *For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what do the Scripture says? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."* then in verse 6 *Just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God*

imputes righteousness apart from works. So what God was giving was not just righteousness it was the righteousness of God. He was not just washing our sins. He was giving some quality of His nature into us. In the Old Testament, they were a few people who had a glimpse of His nature that He straightaway put into their lives to turn them around. And that was how they existed in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, this revelation is supposed to increase. We are not talking about righteousness because of the law. We are talking about God's gift of His righteousness. II Cor. 5:21 tells us that Christ was made sin that we might be made the righteousness of God. So, it's a different quality that we are talking about.

There are two types of righteousness one is the righteousness of the law and the other is the righteousness of God. Lets focus on Rom. 3:21 just to follow the theme to show you it's the gift of righteousness. *But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets.* That means, the law and the Prophets of the Old Testament had a glimpse of the righteousness. And every time the prophets prophesy, they talked about the righteousness that is to come and the righteousness of God that will be revealed among man. It was not something that man could attain but something that man can receive. This righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ is available to all and on all who believe, for there is no difference. Again, I submit to you that Paul was talking about a different type of righteousness, which is God's righteousness a gift of God.

Rom. 10 again emphasizing that there is a righteousness of the law and the righteousness of God. Verse 5-6 and just looking at these two verses tell you that there are two types of righteousness. One that is of the law and one that is of faith which is a gift. And the law can never reach to the level that God wants. *For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them."* But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way. See he is contrasting the righteousness of the law versus the righteousness of faith. The righteousness of the law can only bring a person to righteousness to a certain extend but it cannot bring a person into transformation. And therefore, God in His mercy revealed in Jesus the gift of righteousness.

Now Christianity is a faith that still seeks to bring holiness and righteousness into us. But the process is different. It's not by trying to be good. It's not by building up good works. It is accepting Jesus into our hearts and letting Him live through us. And keep welcoming Him to live through us. And in the process of allowing Him to live through us, that would change us. It is just like the way a car is driven depends on the personality of the driver. A car would become fast and aggressive if the driver is fast and aggressive. But a car becomes stable and steady if the driver is also stable and steady. In the same way, when we yield to Jesus and let Him control us, our life, our spirit, our soul and our body begin to be transformed. When the devil was controlling us we were willful and disobedient to God. And the key to righteousness in our lives is to yield to Jesus Christ and resist the devil.

Rom. 10:3 *For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, (and many Christians are trying to do,) have not submitted to the righteousness of God.* Have you notice the words they used. The righteousness of God is not something we can earn. It is something that you can never change you can only let Him change you. You submit to it. But the righteousness of the law is different. You are trying to accumulate merits in God. Look at this it is the righteousness that we must submit to. It treats righteousness as if it's a person you can submit to. It treats righteousness as if righteousness is a person who can talk and say, "Righteousness, take over my life now." And indeed righteousness is not merits alone righteousness is a person the person of Christ. And God is telling that the fullness of Christian life is not to live your own life but to allow Jesus to live through you. And we forget to let Jesus live through us. Whenever we fail in our Christian life, we just forgot to let Jesus live through us. But if we began to let Jesus live through us, there will be a change to bring us to complete transformation.

I emphasize again that we have to submit to the righteousness of God. Rom. 5:17 *For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many*

will be made righteous.

It didn't say that your obedience would make you righteous. It didn't say that the church's obedience would make us righteous although we need to learn obedience. But it says by Jesus' obedience we were made righteous. Do you know what many Christians are trying to do? They are trying to obey God. As you're trying to obey God it's not your obedience that brings you righteousness. It is Christ's obedience that brought righteousness. We must learn to be obedient as we are being transformed. But it is more learning to yield and submit to the righteousness of Jesus in our life. No amount of your obedience can earn righteousness. Obedience in prayer, obedience in devotions, obedience in the bible, obedience to do good works, obedience to church, obedience to fellow man, obedience to parents, all these are good things but they don't earn righteousness. One Man's obedience earned the righteousness. If that righteousness is already earned, paid for, we need to learn to receive it. If we don't learn to receive, we will be still struggling to earn. And you cannot do two things at the same time. You cannot be trying to earn and trying to receive. You either receive it or you try to earn it. Yet many are trying to gain merits with God.

Let me bring an illustration to bring it across. Let us say this man sitting here, Bill, has his hands full. He is holding a coat in one hand and a briefcase in the other hand. Then he is also trying to hold a book under one armpit and an umbrella under the other. The briefcase, the coat, the book and the umbrella represent different aspects of Christian life. Let's say this bible represents the gift of righteousness. He is already carrying so many things. And I said, "Bill, can you take my bible here?" There is no way he can take my bible. His hands are already full. Can you see the struggle? He is trying to hold on to all these other things that he can't receive the bible. And that's what our life is like. We are trying to be a good Christians. The briefcase represents our trying to be a prayerful person. The coat represents our trying to pray in tongues more. And we are trying to keep doing all these things but first you must receive the gift of righteousness and let it balance from there then everything else will balance up. In fact, he can't even unload himself now. It's difficult trying to put down everything. So we got to help him to unload all those things. We can see that sometimes we are so involved and engrossed in exercising the different aspects of Christian living that we forget that the most important is to receive the gift of

righteousness.

Now the gift of righteousness will be like a huge box and you can throw everything in. It's just a matter of organization. How many things did he carry? He carried a briefcase, a coat, an umbrella and a book. Here is the good news: when you received the righteousness of God, you received the ability to carry all those things properly. It's a matter of organization. Let's say he received the gift of righteousness first. The gift of righteousness teaches him how to organize his life. It is now an art, no more a struggle.

There are so many factors in life that we won't know how to function in them if we do not have the gift of righteousness. You learn 21 points of Christian life – worship, intercession, praying in tongues, meditation, repentance, love, waiting upon God, etc but when you apply them, you find that you need the 22nd point. But the 22nd part is the part that makes the difference – it teaches you how to organize the 21 points and put them in order. The 22nd point is the gift of righteousness that tells you what to do first and so on. Without the 22nd gift of righteousness, you would be confused and wouldn't know where to start among the 21 points you have learnt.

Now Bill put all his things in the box and his hands are free. He still has the same amount of things but now it is a different arrangement. Now his position is different from the previous position when he was carrying all his things all over him. He is still carrying the same amount of things but he can re-organize it in a better way.

Now Bill wears his coat first because Jesus in him teaches him how to do it. And then he takes his coat and he wears it too. But do you know in his new position after receiving the gift of righteousness, he can now wear his coat, which he couldn't earlier when he was so confused carrying so many things. Now Bill knows how to put the book in his briefcase instead of carrying it under his armpit. Then he takes the umbrella from under his other armpit and holds it with his right hand like a dignified gentleman. The bible gives him the knowledge of

how to balance everything. Human life is an art. If it's not an art, we will all be robots. If you put everyone through the same regimented training without concern for individual aptitudes and talents, they will all come out the same robots. You can send one thousand students to the same school, studying the same subjects and they will still come out different because human life is an art. Human life has never been a form of robotic slavery.

In the same way, if we forget to put righteousness in its proper place we are out of balance. When you are out of balance, it is like a tight rope where you cannot balance other things in your life. Now the balance factor comes from knowing that it's no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me. When Christ is alive in us then you know He can tell you a lot of things, He can tell you the things in between the lines. Although you learned ten points, you won't know how to apply the ten points unless He teaches you that point two can help you to apply point one. Jesus can teach you sub points one and two that the preacher couldn't cover because no matter how you teach, everybody has their finer peculiarities that still need special personal attention from God. And that is why it's an art.

But here is an important factor we must always remember - that righteousness is a gift. And you start from that perspective. Then starting from that perspective you learn how to walk your Christian life. It is just like when you go for singing lessons. Do you know that your first lesson in singing is not really singing? Your first lesson is when the teacher teaches you how to relax. If you are so tense, how will you sing properly? You may think your teacher will teach you how to sing the *do-re-mi* notes. I can guarantee you the first thing the teacher would teach you is how to relax, how to sing from your diaphragm and how to breathe properly. These are the first lessons because unless you get these things right your vocalizing will either strain your throat or it will just warm up your throat. In the same way by getting righteousness in the right perspective, we are able to balance our life. But we must always see that not we trying to get it but its already there and we believe its there and from there it flows through our life that's the first.

Look at Rom. 10:4 *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to*

everyone who believes. Verse 6 But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, who will ascend into heaven?" (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or, "Who will descend into the abyss?" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead) what does he say the word is near you even in your mouth and in our heart the word of faith. Verse 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness.

The first key is to believe. To believe that it's yours, it's your free gift that you are righteous, that you are cleansed, that His righteousness is in you, that you are accepted in God. I find that trying to get to believe that is difficult. For some reasons, people don't want to believe that God accepts them. Because of our iniquities, our shortcomings, our failures, it is very hard for humans to believe that God accepts them. God loves you; God likes you. Not many Christians can feel that God likes them. Yes, theologically they know that *God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes should not perish but shall have eternal life.* It's a theological thing. Deep in their hearts, the theological part is O.K., the principle part is O.K. the understanding part they know. But the art part that really in their heart God loves them, they find it hard to accept and believe.

Do you know that is the first place we must always start in life? If you don't have God's love in your heart the vacuum will always pressurize you. You always start everyday by saying to God, "Lord, You love me." I know some of you are so spiritual that you always start with, "I love you, Lord." Remember it is God who first loves us and therefore, we can love God. We can never out love God. So always start the day by saying, "God loves me, God likes me." You are not trying to do some psychological or positive thinking in your daily life but it has to sink down into us that God really loves me, that God really likes me. It doesn't matter if you think some people don't like you but if you know that God loves you and God likes you, after some time you can believe that people do love you and like you too.

When you tell people you are righteous in God, some people might ask you what concept of righteousness you have. Righteousness is basically that you

can go to God and just sit on God's lap and don't feel anything. But some of us won't dare to approach God. We will ask, "Is He going to beat me up? Is He going to strike me with a lightning bolt?" What does it mean that we are righteous? Doesn't it mean that God looks at you like He looks at Jesus? Can Jesus run up and sit on His lap? Can Jesus just approach God and say, Father, let's discuss the world situation?" Of course, He can. God's righteousness as a gift to us means that God loves us, He likes us. He really likes you, you that you see in the mirror every morning that even you yourself may not like. But He likes you; He is so in love with you.

Now that consciousness is something that we need to get more and more. John 3:16 is not just a verse for non-Christians. It is a verse that we must have not only in our heart and in our mind but be in the resources of our being that God so loved. It didn't just say, "God loved the world." The word "so" was put there for the extra emphasis. *God so loved the world.* God did not just love but He so loved you and I. And it's something you and I can never earn. He is just our Daddy. He gave birth to us through His Spirit. And we cry Abba Father which means daddy. That's what the bible is trying to bring forth.

It is supposed to be fun to live in God, not miserable and pitiable. Rom. 8 it says in verse 15 *For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear.* What kind of fear? We fear God. We still fear God and respect God in a sense. But it's the wrong kind of fear whether we please Him or not, whether we are doing the right thing or not, whether we deserve judgment or not, whether we are going to be punished or not. All kinds of fear. We didn't receive that spirit of fear anymore. It says that *you receive the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, Abba! Father.* In the Western world, they call *daddy*; here in Asia we use *papa*.

Whether we actually cried, "Daddy," to God is irrelevant. But that's what it means is that the day you were born again, behold old things have passed away all things have become new. And God's Spirit came into your life and you cried, "Daddy," and it brings a smile in God's face. And God says, "O my little child." From that day onwards, God has always loved you. Yes, you may be a naughty little toddler, but God says, "That's my son and daughter." Even though your

children may fail here and there, you are still a daddy and a mommy to them. It goes beyond theology - they will always be your sons and daughters. And we will always be sons and daughters in God. That's the way God wants us to be. We must always start from that platform in our life. You are righteous. You don't have to do anything more to please God. Not one more thing you need to please God. Some people will think if I teach like that then they won't need to pray anymore. They won't need to read the bible anymore. In a sense, theologically yes. You don't need to do all these to please God. But let me tell you what happens. When you discovered God loves you, you want to read the bible even more. You want to pray to Him even more. You want to talk to Him about everything. I know sometimes preachers think that if you teach like that and teach people what the Word reveals about the righteousness of God that Christians will become lazy in a sense that God has given everything and we don't need to do nothing more.

But when people claim to be that way, they don't have a real revelation yet. When you know on your inside that Papa God loves you, you want to please Papa. When you know on your inside that Daddy God loves you so much that if you hurt your little toe He will take you in His arms and comfort you, it makes you want to talk to Him about every little thing. Just like my son always do when he does something new. I am one of the first one he wants to show me. Even if I am talking to somebody, he will run down the stairs and say, "Papa come and see this." Why, because I love him and enjoy what he does. It is the same way in your relationship with God. When you know God loves you, you will do whatever little thing you can to please God. This kind of truth won't make Christians lazy if they have the true revelation. And you are not seeking this as an excuse to live your own life. But if you really have the revelation of how much God means to you and how much you mean to God and what God has given you, you will never be the same. It will make you want to talk to God. And every time you want to do something you always automatically talk to God and say, "Father God can you guide me in this area?" It makes your Christian life different. It makes you want to pray more. It makes you want to read the bible more to discover what are the good things Papa God has for you. It doesn't have the opposite effect if you have the revelation of God in your life. The key is faith. Believe in the righteousness of God that in one Man's obedience you are made righteous. Even though the time frame can be different but righteousness is a spiritual force that knows no time barrier. It flows from Calvary into the new

millennium.

Lets turn to the book of Romans. See the whole book of Romans is full of this contrast between the righteousness of the law and the righteousness of faith. Rom.9:30 *What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith; but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.* You can never reach it; you can only have it by believing. You cannot have it by any other way. Believers believing what God tells them receive it. There have been times when words have not been able to express how moved I feel in the presence of God when I meditate on how He loves us. And it makes you want to do more things for God. After our worship time when we love God and we know how much He loves us and we rejoice in Him until tears flow from our eyes, what does it make us feel? It makes you want to live for God. It doesn't make you lazy. It makes you more diligent and hard working. But yet we work hard not because we want to earn our righteousness. We work hard because we received the strength to be able to do something for God. And we know that what we do we don't have to try. We just allow Him to live through us. And we know that it's the works that He created for us to walk in.

Rom. 4:21 *Being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. And therefore, it was accounted to him for righteousness.* He just got it through believing. It is so simple and yet so difficult for man to be able to just come to God and believe in His great love for us. When you believe the next thing is to receive the revelation of His love. Now what is the best picture of the love of God? There is only one picture. Long ago, there was a play made by one very gifted person. It's a secular play with a Christian theme. The play was about mankind, trials, suffering, tremolos, and the life of mankind. All through the play, the film showed scene after scene of mankind's difficult moments. Moments when mankind were at war. They showed scenes of World War I, World War II. They showed scenes of famine, scenes of man's achievements, modern cities, gardens, beautiful creations. Then they showed more suffering. They showed earthquakes, and all kinds of tragedies. They showed all kinds of people dying. All the suffering you can name and think of. They showed scene after scene for nearly two hours. Then at the end of the show there is a person who came up to the stage and said in anger at God, "God, don't you care for us?" Then he walked

out of the stage. There is only one little light shining on the stage. And the light focused on only one little picture and it formed a cross. The greatest picture of love is Jesus. Think about love in a visual form. You probably think about someone who is loving, your mommy, your daddy. What was your greatest moment of love? Your husband, your wife, your father, your mother, but you know there is no greater picture of love than Jesus in all His suffering on the cross on Calvary. There is no greater picture of love than Jesus walking on this earth going to the cross to die, buried and raise again the third day, only Jesus.

The second thing that needs to happen, as you believe in God's love for us is to receive a picture of revelation of Jesus inside us. I am not talking about a vision of an actual picture. By a picture, I mean it could be an emotional picture. It could be a feeling picture. But it's some sort of knowledge that you have met Jesus. Jesus can be met in many ways. When you came into this church, Jesus was here. You may not have seen Him or have any image or vision of Him but you felt His presence. See the second thing that needs to happen is this - there is no greater picture of God's love that can re-vitalize our heart and energy than the picture of the love of Jesus.

In the book of II Cor. 3:17 *Now the Lord is the Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. But we all with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.* Now the only way you can change is by seeing Him. If you don't see Him, you cannot be changed. I am not talking about people with vision or the gift of discerning of spirits. But it's the revelation of Jesus in our hearts. Jesus says in Jn. 14 If you love Me keep my commandments and I will manifest Myself to you. He says in Jn. 14 also the world will not see Me but you will see Me. Because I live you will live also. Do you notice that the phrase, "Because I live you will live also," is followed by the phrase, "The world will not see Me but you will see Me." You will somehow have knowledge of Jesus. Not just intellectually but spiritually there will be some sort of knowledge of Christ that comes into us beyond intellect beyond emotions, beyond our soul, but some spiritual revelation of Christ deep in our hearts and we are transformed.

No. 1 believe. No. 2 receive the new revelation of Christ in you. We

always need a new revelation of Christ. You may have walked with Jesus for twenty years. But when Jesus reveals Himself He always reveals some part of His being more that still touches you. And every time He touches you, you cry out like Job, "Now I see Him I bow in ashes and sackcloth before Him." Before he met God and God showed Himself he complained he did this, he did that and he argued that he has not done anything to deserve the calamities in his life. But when he met God, he said his lips are sealed.

The revelation of Jesus needs to come into our hearts. In II Cor. 3 the word "transformed" is the same word *metamorphoo* Christ is formed in our heart by the revelation of the glory of God inside us. II Cor. 4:6 *For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our heart to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* Ten thousand years would not be enough to see all His glory. Even if everyday you have a fresh revelation of Jesus in your heart and you live a hundred and twenty years you will have only touched on one aspect of Jesus. He is the Lily of the valley. The Fairest of ten thousands. Bright as the Morning Star. The Alpha and the Omega. The One who is and who was and who is to come. He is called by a thousand names. He is loved by millions and millions of human beings. The revelation of Jesus must enter our heart. And when He enters your heart, you will never be the same. All your chains will fall before Jesus. All the tears of your eyes will fall before Jesus. All your bondages will flee. Every demon has always fled at the utterance of Jesus' name. When Jesus comes, the demons cry. No disease and no sickness can stand in the presence of Jesus. He is the answer to all of our life. But we need the revelation of Jesus in our heart.

We can read the bible ten thousand times and you will always find one more aspect of Jesus that you never saw before. No. 1 believe He loves you and He gives you His righteousness. No. 2 receive the revelation of Jesus in your heart and in your life.

Watchman Nee in one of his books "A Normal Christian Life" and some of his other writings spoke about how in a revival meeting, a bible scholar prayed a great theological prayer about the names of God, the power of God, the

omnipresence of God and all the greatness of God. He prayed from Genesis to Revelation from pre-destination to foreknowledge but nobody was touched. Then a little girl comes and all she did was say a simple prayer, "Lord Jesus I love you. I love you with all of my heart, all of my pain." And she wept and cried. But in a few seconds, the whole congregation was in tears. You know who had the revelation. Not the scholar but the little girl. It's the revelation of Jesus in her heart that touched the people.

Jesus in His parable says that two men came for prayer. One was a Pharisee who prayed great prayer. He said, "God I have fasted three times a week, I have done this and I have done that. I am not like the Publican over there." But the Publican came to God and said, "O God forgive me. O God I want you. O God help me. I need you." And Jesus said the Publican went away changed but the Pharisee remained as he is. For in his bible knowledge he has no revelation of God.

The revelation of God is not something we can define with our intellect. Not something we can define with our emotion. It is something deep in our spiritual core of our being, when we believe how much God loves us and we receive Him not by our works but by grace. Then we allow Him to reveal Himself in our being. Like the song says, "In my inner most being, Jesus the Christ appears." When He appears deep in the corridor of your soul and your spirit you will never be the same. And that's where true transformation is. That's where the power of Christianity lies - in the revelation of Christ in our heart and in our mind. And until He comes, He will continue to reveal Himself in our heart.

May our hearts be tender and soft for Him to reveal through us. When you believe and then you receive His revelation, you will be transformed. Christ will be formed in you. As you behold the face of Christ in the glory of God, you will be *metamorphoo* into another degree of His image. Then when you look around, you find that the chain that held you, the bad habit that clung to you, have dropped off without even you realizing it. Because you have found Him and the revelation has changed you. And Paul says in II Cor. 4 that everyday there was a revelation of Christ. He says our inner man is being renewed everyday. Everyday of your Christian life you can know the presence of the abiding Christ

in you. Everyday He wants to live through you. But you must believe and you must receive His revelation. And the rest of the works He will live through you.