

## The All-Sufficient Life

Ellet J. Waggoner  
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“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ; even as He chose as in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before Him in love; having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved; in whom we have our redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace” (Eph. 1:3-7, R.V.).

**“In Him”**: Notice that everything is in Christ. In Him we have “all spiritual blessings.” “For all the promises of God in Him are yes; and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us” (2 Cor. 1:20). In Him we were chosen, and in Him we are accepted. In Him we have forgiveness of sins. In Him we become sons, and in Him we are made “holy and without blame.” “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him” (Col. 2:9, 10).

**“In Him was Life”**: According to the most critical Greek text, John 1:3, 4 reads, as is indicated in the margin of the Revised Version, “All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made. That which hath been made was life in Him; and the life was the light of men.” That is to say, everything exists by virtue of His life. “In Him were all things created; . . . and in Him all things consist” (Col. 1:16, 17). “As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself” (John 5:26). That is why He is the “wisdom of God, and the power of God.”

**“Saved by His Life”**: Christ is, by virtue of His kinship with men, “a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people” (Heb. 2:17). But He is made priest according to “the power of an endless life” (Heb. 7:16). He is “the Author of life” (Acts 3:15, R.V., margin), and therefore He is “the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him” (Heb. 5:9). “If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life” (Rom. 5:10). Here is continuation, not contrast. In His death, Christ gives His life to us. The reception of that life reconciles us to God. If the reception of that life reconciles us when we were enemies, much more will the holding fast the life save us now that we have become friends.

**The Redemption In Christ Jesus**: “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past” (Rom. 3:23-25). This is the same as the text first quoted: “In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” “The redemption that is in Christ Jesus,” is “the remission of sins that are past,” or the forgiveness of sins. And this is accomplished by His blood.

**Forgiveness by His Life:** The blood is the life. “Flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat” (Gen. 9:4). “For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls” (Lev. 17:11). Therefore when we read that we have redemption, or the forgiveness of sins, through the blood of Christ, we know that it means that we have forgiveness through His life. “The redemption that is in Christ Jesus,” is the life that is in Him. He “was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification” (Rom. 4:25).

**“The Lord Our Righteousness”:** In the days to come, when Christ shall be King over all the earth, “This is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS” (Jer. 23:6). This righteousness is His life: “for as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous” (Rom. 5:18, 19). His obedience and righteousness become ours when we receive His life.

**Justification Is Righteousness:** A friend has forwarded to me a severe condemnation of a statement made some time ago, to the effect that to justify means to make righteous. The criticism was based on the fact that “Grove’s Greek Lexicon” does not so define the Greek word from which justify is translated. Opening Liddell and Scott’s Greek Lexicon, I find the very first definition of the word in question is “to make righteous.” But that is only by the way. Appeals to Greek Lexicons do not edify people. It was stated that “being justified,” means, “being made righteous,” because that definition is patent from the reading of the English Bible. In addition to what has already been presented, read the following: —

“Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1). But peace is for those only who love and keep the commandments, which are righteousness. (See Isa. 48:18; Ps. 119:165,172). Moreover, “with the heart man believeth unto righteousness” (Rom. 10:10).

We are “justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,” through faith in His blood, because His righteousness is declared “for the remission of sins that are past.” Justification is therefore the forgiveness of sins.

**Forgiveness Makes Righteous:** But to be forgiven is to be made righteous. Forgiveness is not an imaginary thing, but is real. If I forgive a fellow man, it makes no difference in him; the effect is only upon him. But when God forgives us, He continues the same, but the forgiveness effects a change in us. It takes away the sin. But when sin is taken away, righteousness must take its place. A new life—the righteous life of Christ—is given in place of the old life of sin.

**Forgiveness and Cleansing:** The same precious truth is taught in the oft-quoted words of John: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). Note that the forgiveness and the cleansing are immediately consequent upon the confession. When we confess we are

forgiven and cleansed. We have already seen that we have forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ (Col. 1:14), and we read also that “the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:7). So we find that forgiveness and cleansing are really one and the same thing, wrought by the appropriation of the life of Christ. The life of Christ is all righteousness, and so its reception cleanses from all sin; but nothing less than the life of Christ can cleanse a single sin.

**One, Undivided Life:** Christ has but one life. He needs but one, for the one is so infinite that it comprehends everything. “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (Rom. 8:32). He laid down His life, and He took it again, because it was a perfect life. He needed not, as we do, to change His life. One life such as His is all sufficient, and that is why we exchanged our life for His. Having it, we are saved by it.

And Christ’s life is undivided. He is not parceled out into fractions, so much to each believer. Each believer receives the whole of Christ. “Of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace” (John 1:16). “Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ” (Eph. 4:7). And since a single sin cannot be removed from the soul except by the life of Christ, it follows that in the forgiveness of sins we have the richest gift that heaven can bestow, - the gift by grace - “the gift of righteousness” (Rom. 5:15, 17). Being made righteous [justified] by faith, “we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1).

**“Grow In Grace”:** “What!” exclaims one, in astonishment, “do you mean to say that there is no ‘higher life,’ no ‘second blessing’? Is a man never to advance beyond the point where his sins are first forgiven?” Yes, most certainly. The “higher life” is the life in Christ, there is none higher, and this life is given to us in the forgiveness of sins. To be blessed with “all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus,” and to be raised to “sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 1:3; 2:6) is as high a life as a man can aspire to.

As to a “second blessing,” the man who is content with it is as much to be pitied, as is the man who is content with a first. Rather accept the continuous blessing of the endless life of our Lord. “Of His fullness have all we received, and grace for (or upon) grace.” He adds grace to grace in endless succession. But all comes from the one life, which, received by faith, cleanses from sin.

So a man is certain to advance beyond the point where he was “first forgiven,” but it is continual forgiveness—continual righteousness applied—by the one life. Growth is the law of the Christian life. But we are to grow in grace, not grow into grace. Grace is the only soil, which promotes spiritual growth.

Notice the statement, “Being justified by faith we have peace with God.” It is not enough that we were at one time justified, but it must be kept up. The blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. It is not momentary, but continuous.

**“The Knowledge of Christ”:** “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and

Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). The trouble with so many people is "that they do not know the value of the treasure which they have received. They receive Christ, and are blessed; then, by reason of not increasing in the knowledge of Him, they are conscious of a great lack, and so hastily conclude that the gift, which they have received, is not great enough, and that God must have another in reserve for them. As though God had any greater gift than Christ, or that when He gave Christ, He made some reservation. No, with Him He freely gives us "all things." If we have received Christ, our part is to study Him that we may know that in Him all our wants are supplied.

"Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph. 1:15-20).