

Daily Devotional: September 23, 2020 What Me, Righteous?

“I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles. See, the former things have taken place, and new things I declare; before they spring into being, I announce them to you.” Isaiah 42:6,9 (NIV)

What was the first Bible verse that really impacted you? There were many verses I had to memorize at St. Paul Lutheran Elementary School in Oak Lawn, IL., but over time for me, one of the first verses that really grabbed my attention was from 2 Corinthians 5:17: ***Anyone who is joined to Christ is a new being; the old is gone, the new has come!***

Thank God that by about the 5th grade, we had a more contemporary translation in Good News For Modern Man to memorize, rather than the more stoic King James Version we started out with!

We all like new things, and especially the idea of becoming new, but what exactly does this mean to become new? I mean, I'm constantly going through new transitions in life, but it's still me here. How have I become new? How have things now become what they never were before?

I actually think that this is where a lot of people get tripped up on this whole thing called Christianity—when we begin talking about becoming someone new. I mean, I look in the mirror and I see the same face staring back at me. When I step onto the scale each morning I still weigh about the same. I have the same health issues and allergies. You're telling me that I'm new, but I still lose my temper over the same annoyances. What type of new are we talking about?

Well, look again at our verses from Isaiah today. You can claim these words personally. God is saying, “Yes, I made the first call. I called out to you. I called you in righteousness.”

Maybe you're reading this today and in total honesty with the Lord, you're saying, “Well okay, You called me, but I'm not at all righteous.”

But the fact remains, God has called you in righteousness. In other words, God sees you in a new way. God doesn't see you as you see yourself when you look in the mirror. God sees you as a finished project. I don't know if anyone's ever told you this before, or maybe they have said it, but they meant it in a negative way: “You're finished!” God instead means it in the most positive ways of what Christ has done for you: You're finished—a perfect finished product!

“Well,” you think, “I need to prop this up and this up and this up. I need to work on this and this and get back to the gym to get more solid.”

No, you're finished. Can you just relax and enjoy the fact that because of Christ, you're done? You're finished. You're complete. When Jesus sees you, He sees the finished work. He says, I called you in righteousness. It's not something that you can earn, okay? That's only something you can receive. He calls you in righteousness.

If that is not enough then understand this: In the beginning, God's words created everything that now is. And now, by His grace and mercy, even when we were *not* righteous, He *called* us righteous, declaring *new things* before they even existed.

Let us get one thing clear: If God said it, it is most definitely true, and GOD CALLS YOU RIGHTEOUS! Receive that from God's hand today.

Prayer: Most generous God, thank You for calling me righteous! I could not be righteous on my own without Your transformation of me, and today I receive the truth that You have made me righteous. I am a finished product! The old is gone and the new really has come! By your grace, Amen.