

## **PROGRESSIVE AND COMPLETED JUSTIFICATION**

THE Court and the Tabernacle may properly be viewed from two different standpoints, the one representing the final accomplishment of the things typified and the other representing the tentative accomplishment of those things and the progress toward their full attainment. For instance, not every one who makes the consecration to death and passes beyond the first veil of consecration into the holy or spirit-begotten condition will be a Priest, and yet only the Priests were allowed in the Tabernacle. Those who come into this Tabernacle now by consecration and fail to become Priests will fail to keep their standing in this place. They purpose to live up to their consecration, but come short; hence they fail to maintain their standing as Priests, but fall back and become Levites.

Likewise some come into the Court and essay to be antitypical Levites who do not attain to all the privileges of Levites because they do not conform their lives fully to all that is required of Levites. Such are reckoned as coming into the Court condition for a time, but, failing to go on and make consecration, lose their standing, the prospective standing of Levites. As it is only a tentative standing, originally, they must come up to certain requirements to make it sure, to make their selection as Levites firm, positive, lasting.

### **STEPS NECESSARY TO BECOME A LEVITE**

Whoever takes the first step of belief and turns from sin and approaches the altar, and then goes on toward the laver, is certainly evidencing the fact that he desires to be one of the Levite class; but he is a member of this Levite class, as yet, only in this tentative or prospective sense. The Levites must go further than merely believing in Christ and turning from sin. Every Levite

must figuratively receive the anointing oil on his ear, his thumb and the great toe of his right foot. He must make his consecration the same as that of the priests; he must be *fully* consecrated in order to serve. The person, therefore, who has merely turned away from sin and has in antitype received no recognition of the holy Spirit either upon his ear, thumb or toe, has not become, in the fullest sense, a Levite and if he does not go on and become a Levite in full he will not, by and by, have a right to any place in the Court condition – when the testing time shall prove that he has not gone on to make good, to accomplish, his consecration as a Levite.

What, then, is necessary to become a Levite? We answer: The same consecration is necessary to a Levite that is necessary to a Priest, and those who will become Levites must make the consecration even unto death, and, if they fail to become Priests, it is because they do not carry out that consecration unto death. But though losing their position as Priests, if they still maintain their faith and a measure of obedience, they are counted as of the household of faith, typified by the Levites. In other words, the "Great Company" class is the Levite class, and no one can be of the "Great Company" class unless he has made a consecration; and he is counted an antitypical Levite only because of his failure to be of the priestly class, the sacrificing class. Those who never go on so far as to make a consecration, never get justification in full in the present life. Their hope will be the same as that of the remainder of the world, viz., a hope of actual justification during the Millennial Age – Restitution. In other words, this matter of faith-justification is merely an incidental feature connected with the consecration to death – for the selection of this special class which is now being called. To impute justification to any except these would be greatly to their disadvantage.

## **CHRIST'S MERIT NOT IMPUTED BEFORE CONSECRATION**

To use an illustration: Suppose that Brother A had *full justification accounted to him* and was introduced to the Father, and suppose that Brother A then failed to maintain his justified standing; the result would be that he would fall into the Second Death, because he had had, in this faith-justification, *all* that Christ could give him; there would be nothing more to give him by and by. He could not come in with the world and get a share in the world's justification. Therefore the Lord has arranged that none shall have this complete faith-justification now except those who first turn from sin and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and who, on the strength of that turning from sin and faith in Christ, present their bodies living sacrifices to God. God's arrangement for such is that Christ shall then step in, and that which they had been enjoying in a measure, previously, as regards relationship to God, etc., is brought to its actual fulness when Christ imputes his merit to that which they have fully consecrated to death – their earthly life, their earthly nature. He imputes his merit to them at the moment of their having presented themselves; and at that moment the Father accepts the sacrifice and seals or shows his acceptance by the impartation of the holy Spirit, begetting them to the new nature. So, then, none now get justification in this full sense except those who have made the consecration and been accepted, and they can never regain the earthly rights because these were given up.

To suppose that any during this age would be justified and maintain merely justification, while others would be sanctified, would be to suppose that God had called two classes, which he has not done – "Ye are all called in the one hope of your calling" and that one hope and that one calling of the Church is to membership in Christ, to be of the Royal Priesthood.

Those who merely believe and fail to lay down their earthly life, their earthly nature, will not get the new nature, and therefore will have all the rights of that earthly nature by and by, during the Millennial Age, under the terms and conditions that God has provided for all mankind. They still belong to the human family, for whom Christ died. When the time shall come for him to make application of his merit on behalf of Israel, and all the families of the earth who become Israelites, these will be included. The only ones not included in this will be those who during this Gospel Age have accepted Christ by faith and have made consecration of themselves and, having died to all earthly interests, are begotten of the holy Spirit. Everyone else will have a share in the Restitution provisions of God's great plan, which will go into effect as soon as the High Priest shall make the second sprinkling of blood antitypically on behalf of Israel and the world.

Is it not true, then, someone may ask, that no one passes from *death* unto *life* until he has made his consecration and has his justification vitalized? Yes, we answer. No one passes "from death unto life" until he makes his consecration and until Christ imputes his merit to that consecration and the Father accepts it. Then he passes "from death unto life." As the Apostle says, "Hereby we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we *love* the brethren" and he evidently is speaking of the Church class exclusively. [R4657 : page 247]

### **"CALLET THOSE THINGS WHICH BE NOT AS THOUGH THEY WERE"**

And, again, someone may ask, how can we understand the following in connection with the foregoing – "God is not the God of the dead but of the living"? (Luke 20:38.) Our Lord was not speaking of things as they are actually, but he was looking down prophetically to the end of the Age. At the time this was said, we remember, the Lord was referring to God's statement that he was

"the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." (Rom. 4:17.) Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were dead; they were members of Adam's condemned race and were in the tomb and Christ had not yet died; therefore, they had not been justified to life and Jehovah's words were to be understood merely in a prophetic sense – that, in view of what he intended to do, these would have life and that he was their God, for he could not speak of himself as being the God of any who would be destroyed in the Second Death, those who would die like a brute beast. – 2 Pet. 2:12.

From the time we begin to approach God we may have proportionately a sense of relief, because we realize that he is merciful and gracious; and the Scriptures assure us that in proportion as we draw near to him, he will draw near to us. This is the attitude of all those who are approaching God, "feeling after God if haply they may find him," and who desire to know God and to do his will and to be in harmony with him. They have a measure of peace, a measure of joy, a measure of blessing. They are going in the right direction; but it is one thing to go in the right direction and another to reach the right spot; they do not reach the right spot until they have gone all the way to full faith and full obedience and the acceptance of the Lord's provision, that if they would be his disciples, followers of him, they must "take up their cross" and walk in his steps, and, as the Apostle says, present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God, their reasonable service. Of this class it could be truly said, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 8:1.) They are in Christ Jesus in the sense of coming into this relationship of begetting of the Spirit and of being members of his Body. These are walking, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, because they have been begotten of the holy Spirit. The others who turn from sin to God, but who never make consecration, are still under the Adamic condemnation because they have never "escaped the condemnation that is on the world," for there is only one way now in which we can escape and that is

through the arrangement of this Gospel Age that we shall not only believe but consecrate. Thus we have the impartation of Christ's merit.

