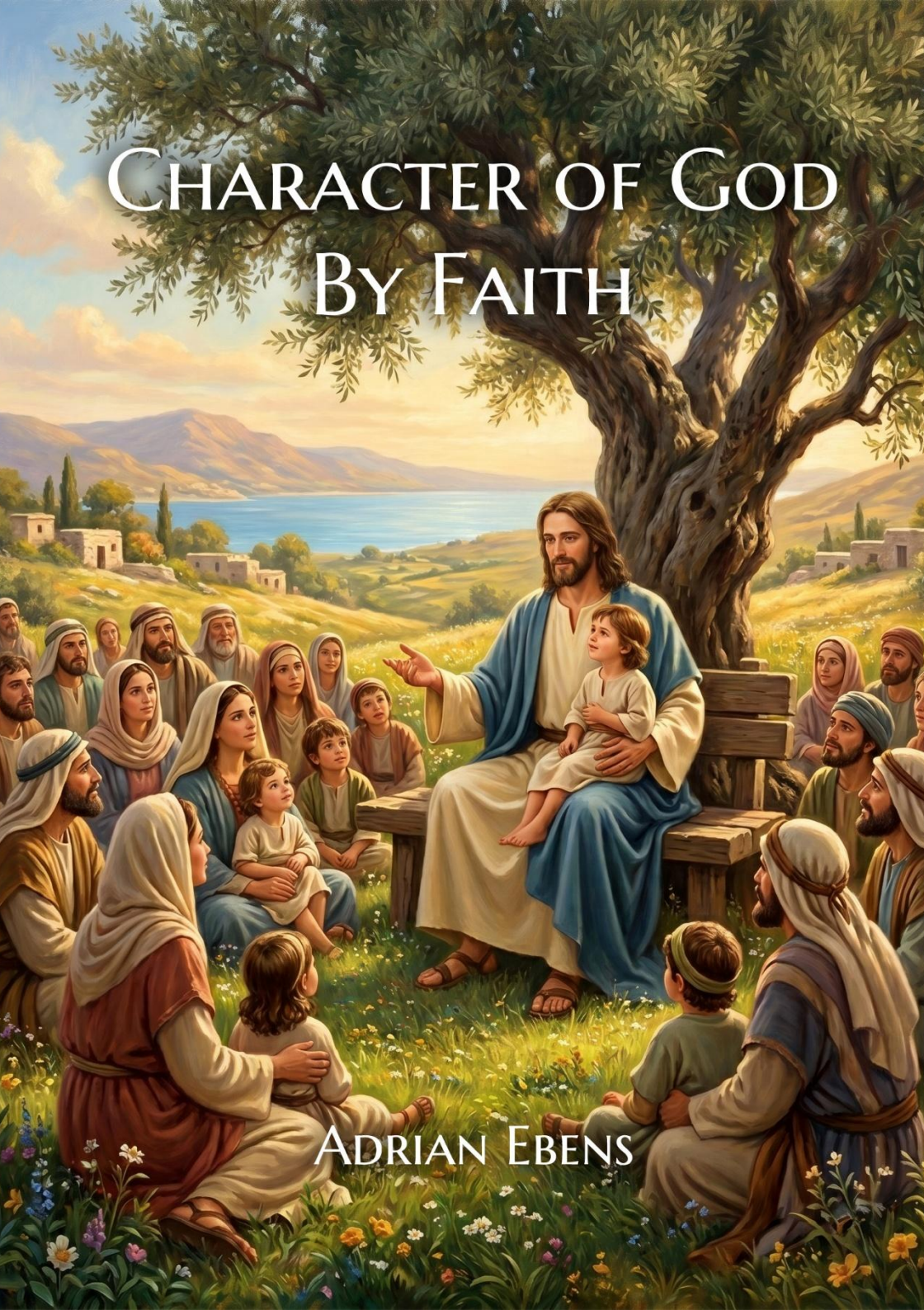


CHARACTER OF GOD BY FAITH



ADRIAN EBENS



Adrian Ebens, May 2026

Copyright © 2026, Adrian Ebens

Maranathamedia.com

The moral right of the author has been asserted.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced for commercial profit, including transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher and copyright holders. Please note the author has highlighted sections of the verses with bold to emphasise a specific point gathered from those texts.

Unless otherwise identified, Scripture quotations are taken from the *New King James Version*. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission.

Scripture quotations attributed to KJV are from the Holy Bible, the *King James Version*. Copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission.

Scripture quotations attributed to ESV are from the Holy Bible, the *English Standard Version*. Copyright © 2001, 2016 by Crossway Bibles, Good News Publishers. Used by permission.

This transcript and all other Maranatha Media publications are available from our website maranathamedia.com to order additional copies please email adrian@maranathamedia.com

This Transcript was

Presented by Adrian Ebens

Transcribed and Proofread by Adam Pearce and Lorelle Ebens

Cover designed by Adrian Ebens

Typeset 10.5/14 Palatino Linotype

Printed in Australia

TRANSCRIPT FROM PRESENTATION
BY ADRIAN EBENS
MAY 2, 2026

CHARACTER OF GOD BY FAITH

Opening Remarks (Pr. Adrian):

I've been working on audio books this week, and Lorelle has been helping me as we've been preparing the scripts. We're putting this into an audio book, *1888 Re-Examined*, by Robert Wieland and Donald Short. I would say, without a shadow of a doubt, that after Ellen White's death, the most important book in Adventism is this book. This is the most important book ever to be written in the Adventist movement since Ellen White has passed away; because it brings us to the core problem that we have and why there's so much difficulty. Between that and the book that Donald Short wrote on the cleansing of the sanctuary. There's some incredible stuff in there that gives us tremendous, tremendous hope. Of course, other books that he has written: *The Knocking at the Door*, I just finished putting that one out.

When I listen to these books and read the books... last night, I was just saying, "Father, I'm so sorry that you have to go through all this." It's just so unfair. And how the leading men of the movement in the 19th century could put on an air of acceptance and all the while they were

working tooth and nail against the message, against Jesus, crucifying Him in the spirit. It's frightening. And it might be well to say with genuineness like the disciples, "Is it I, Lord?" We have the same, if we say, "Oh, thank God I'm not like those men." Do I have, and this is where Wieland talks about this unrealized guilt. "Knowest not that you're wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked." And I'm like, "Well, I know that I'm wretched, miserable." But it says, no, you don't know how bad it really is.

Anyway, I want to talk a little bit today about the subject of righteousness by faith, because that is what is claimed is the 1888 message, rightfully claimed. And the church has claimed that it has accepted that message. We're going to have a bit of a look at that. So, for those who can, let's kneel.

Opening Prayer:

Dear Father, we worship you. We honour you. We come to you to say sorry that this movement has taken so long. We who are studying this message are a scattered flock all around the world. Here and there, ones and twos, threes, fours; scattered. And we face many tests and tribulations. But we are here, Father, and we pray. Please speak to us today. Please send your Spirit. Give us eye salve and that we may be prepared, that we may have gold tried in the fire. There has been some trying already, but there is more trying to come. Let us bear it patiently and in the Spirit of Jesus.

We thank you, Father, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Presentation:

I've entitled this *Character of God by Faith*. So, this is bringing together 25 years plus of research. And we might say, as Paul did at the beginning of Hebrews chapter 8, "Of all that we have said, this is the sum" – *Character of God by Faith*. I want to trace through some of the history on this subject, connecting character of God to righteousness, because I'm substituting the word character of God for the word righteousness. Is that a fair substitution? We shall find out. And connecting this to the

heart of Adventism, which relates to the cleansing of the sanctuary. We must always come back to this particular issue of the cleansing of the sanctuary. Anyway, we shall look at some statements and reflect and seek to go line by line as we look at this.

So, a definition from Ellen White; and these two quotes were actually in a presentation that Elder Colin did back in 2017 on defining justification by faith. A very, very good presentation. I remember it well, even though it was nine years ago; very thankful for the work that Colin did on that. And here is what it says.

“What is justification?” And I’ve substituted the word righteousness there because righteousness in English is translated in most other languages as justice. Justice is righteousness, is justification. So, justification / righteousness by faith.

What is justification[/Righteousness] by faith? It is the work of God in laying the glory of man in the dust,

What’s another word for glory? Character. Laying the character of man in the dust. Because the character of man is made after the similitude or likeness of who? Satan. At enmity with God, Romans 8:7. So we need to lay the character of man in the dust.

and doing for man that which it is not in his power to do for himself.
(*The Review and Herald*, September 16, 1902)

And hopefully we can unpack a little bit of what that means in a new covenant context. “To do for man what it is not in his power to do for himself.” And another statement.

When men learn they cannot earn righteousness by their own merit of works, and they look with firm and entire reliance upon Jesus Christ as their only hope, there will not be so much of self and so little of Jesus. Souls and bodies are defiled and polluted by sin, the heart is estranged from God, yet many are struggling in their own finite strength to win salvation by good works. Jesus, they think, will do some of the saving; they must do the rest. They need to see

by faith the righteousness of Christ as their only hope for time and for eternity. (*The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 818.2)

So, I think we have an understanding that righteousness by faith means trusting alone to Christ. I think we have a fairly clear understanding that that's what needs to happen. But what does it actually mean? This is what we want to have a look at.

We should be familiar with this statement. One of the most important statements is in *Testimonies to Ministers*, end of page 91.

The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones.

What was this message to do?

This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. **It presented justification through faith in the Surety;**

What does that mean? What does presenting justification by faith in the surety, what does that mean? It's certain.

it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God.

So, with what we know, the righteousness of Christ, righteousness equals justice, equals character. The character of Christ which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments. And the commandments are a transcript of His character. Do you see those connecting points there? To receive the character of Christ which is made manifest in obedience to all of the character of God. You could put it that way, couldn't you?

Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, **that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent.**

How does he do this? By His Spirit, which is His blood.

This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure. (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 91.2)

So, the third angel's message is righteousness by faith, is justification by faith, is the receiving of the Holy Spirit, which enables us to have the character of God.

E.J. Waggoner definition. Now, I just thought I'd do a bit of an AI summary. I said, give me an AI summary of E.J. Waggoner's definition of righteousness by faith. And I thought the answer was quite good, because having studied most of his writings, I'm like, Yes, that works.

Ellet J. Waggoner, a key figure in the 1888 Minneapolis General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, defined righteousness by faith not merely as a legal transaction, but as a transformative, living reality. To Waggoner, it was **the "message of God's love" manifested through the indwelling of Christ.** – *AI Summary*

Isn't that good? Now, this immediately tells us that the present Adventism has rejected the 1888 message, because present Adventism, by and large, teach that justification is a legal transaction.

Righteousness by faith therefore means, the life of Christ coming in to direct everything that man does, and especially in the cause of God, because as a matter of fact, if we are Christians we do not do anything that is not in the cause of God. As Christians we do not have two parts to our lives; it is all Christian, and if we say we have given ourselves to the cause of God, then we have no business to be in the cause of God a part of the time, and then a little part of the time do something else. Therefore as we are altogether in the cause, in the work, I say righteousness by faith means nothing less than that by faith everything that is done shall be done. It means that the Lord shall act. It means that we shall trust the Lord so that we shall

understand; because, “by faith we understand.” (E.J. Waggoner
General Conference Bulletin, March 4, 1897)

Audience: But they lock in and follow, Martin Luther, supposedly.

Pr. Adrian: Yes; and Walter Veith is very strong on legal justification, as is Clifford Goldstein, as are all the major theologians. They all believe it must be something completely outside of us. If we have anything to do with it, then it is [perceived as] works.

Fifield definition; and I’ve taken his statement on the atonement, and atonement is righteousness by faith because if you become righteous by faith, you have atonement. And again, there’s fine print to make that connection, but in essence that’s what it means.

An atonement [Righteousness by faith] can be made only by God’s so revealing his love, in spite of sin and sorrow, that men’s hearts will be touched to tenderness; and they, being delivered from Satan’s delusions, may see how fully and terribly they have misunderstood the divine One, and so have done despite to the Spirit of his grace. Thus they may be led, as returning brethren, to come back to the Father’s house in blissful unity.

So, in this definition of the atonement, what is the problem? What’s the problem with us? We have a misunderstanding of the character of God and we are deluded, and in God revealing His love to us, our mind is awakened to the delusion that we’ve believed, our hearts are touched to tenderness, so there’s something going on in the heart, that we are responding to the revelation of God and His love and we are undeceived and then we come to Him as believing that He is a loving Father and the atonement is then complete.

Now what I’m saying to you is completely different from what Christianity teaches. This is not what Christianity teaches, and we’ll look at that a little bit later. This is a complete experiential transaction. What do I mean by experiential?

Audience: It’s lived. We live it.

Pr. Adrian: It's not legal fiction.

Audience: You're participating with God.

Pr. Adrian: You're participating. It's a relational transaction. Something is going on between you and God in that transaction. (This is Fifield, in 1897.)

The atonement is not to appease God's wrath, so that men dare come to him, but it is to reveal his love, so that they will come to him. (George Fifield, *God is Love*, p. 48)

Here is the difference. Because Christianity teaches, Adventism teaches, that the atonement is to appease God's wrath. Now, Adventism doesn't say it that way. They say to satisfy justice, that justice be satisfied, which is the same thing. It's just a bit softer in its expression.

Here's an *Identity Wars* definition. This is the first book that I wrote, after reading many of the writings of Jones and Waggoner, and wanting to put a summary of what I was reading into, for me, an accessible form. So, this is about righteousness by faith, and it's in a relational context. And I didn't know all the things that I've read since, from Fifield and others, but it fits in, as you will see.

Can you see how worth and significance is gained in God's kingdom?

Now, this is the language of *Identity Wars*. We're now talking worth and value, and that relates to how do I find value in God's eyes, which is another way of saying, how am I atoned to God? How am I reconciled to God? This is the language we're using in *Identity Wars*.

It comes from simply realizing that God lovingly thinks about us continually. We are definitely on His mind. He is giving us life, making our hearts beat, and actively pouring His love into our lives so that we can enjoy life; and He imparts to us rich gifts, [that's that quote from *Testimonies to Ministers* "rich gifts"] talents and abilities for our satisfaction, enjoyment and service for others. Here is the secret of God's kingdom, the secret of significance. It is the key that

unlocks the enslaving kingdom of worthlessness and depression.
Do you have the courage to believe it? (*Identity Wars*, p. 20)

Having the courage to believe it, again, involves an extra step. Man cannot just simply believe it. We don't have the capacity in ourselves, and we'll look at that a little bit later.

If our value is determined by the loving thoughts that God has towards us, then this text [Psalm 40:5] tells us that we are priceless, because it says His plans and thoughts for us are greater than can be declared or numbered. How does it feel to be priceless? **But it can only be as good as our belief in the truth that God loves us beyond measure, regardless of how good or bad we are.** This is wonderful news and I am so thankful for it. So whenever you are tempted to doubt your worth, just look at the sparrows and believe! (*Identity Wars*, p. 21)

So, when we see, according to God's word, that we are priceless and your flesh is telling you, "you are worthless", the question is who you are you going to believe? Are you going to trust your feelings about what you think about yourself? Or are you going to trust what God says about you? And this is where justification by faith is the only way to be saved; because it cannot be by works, because our works are useless, worse than useless. They're dangerous, they're deadly, they're horrible. And when we look at ourselves in truth, then there is no way for us to be just before God except by faith. He says, "I love you." He says, "I forgive you." He says, "I will give you My Spirit." And we accept that.

Again, it's not as simple as accepting that. Christ had to do something for us. He had to put enmity in our hearts for sin, and He had to break down the middle wall of partition and slay the enmity to enable us. That was the healing of the withered hand, to enable us to take hold of it. We cannot do it without that. So that's an *Identity Wars* definition.

A quote here about righteousness, justice, and character.

He [Paul] held up before Felix and Drusilla the **character of God**—
Dash. What's the dash mean? Explanation.

.... **character of God**—His righteousness, justice, and equity, and the nature of His law. (*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 423)

Righteousness = Right doing = Justice = What is right.

So, the character of God can be defined as His righteousness. So, we say righteousness by faith, character of God by faith, righteousness / justice by faith, equity by faith, the nature of His law by faith. All of those things can be substituted into the word righteousness by faith. And none of these we can do. We cannot.

And if justification is a legal transaction, then what is there to be done? What is there to be done? There is nothing to be done. And what has to be done, and we'll get into that, is if God's the one that's angry with us because of our sins and Jesus paid the transaction and then God is changed so that He doesn't hate us anymore or doesn't want to kill us anymore, then what else is to be done?

Audience: And why is it taking so long?

Audience: That totally bypasses our unrighteousness. That lets our unrighteousness off the hook because we have to understand what we are like in order to lay that down.

Pr. Adrian: Well, most people would say, yes, we're wretched, we're miserable, we're terrible, we're horrible. Most people would say that. But in denying that we can overcome those things, we're actually denying the true wickedness that exists in the heart. The heart is desperately wicked. And so, the idea of overcoming sin has not really been preached in the Adventist movement for 40 years, since 1980.

Audience: The scary part of it is then God, at the end of it all, when we're changed, He actually overrides our free will and makes us something we have not chosen.

Pr. Adrian: Yes, we all talk about having 'a screw loose.' Well, He fixes the screw.

Audience: And if He fixes that, then we actually have no will of our own any more.

Pr. Adrian: And if He could just turn the screw and make us like that, well, why couldn't He have done that in the beginning? Why 5,000, 6,000 years of sin? If He could have fixed it in the beginning, just turn the screws: "Adam, come here, mate. I'm going to give you a neck adjustment." "Ahh, I'm all good."

What's the statement? No compulsion. No force.

In the work of redemption there is no compulsion. No external force is employed. Under the influence of the Spirit of God, man is left free to choose whom he will serve. In the change that takes place when the soul surrenders to Christ, there is the highest sense of freedom. **The expulsion of sin is the act of the soul itself.** True, we have no power to free ourselves from Satan's control; but when we desire to be set free from sin, and in our great need cry out for a power out of and above ourselves, the powers of the soul are imbued with the divine energy of the Holy Spirit, and they obey the dictates of the will in fulfilling the will of God. (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 466.4)

You have to decide. There's also the quote in *Steps to Christ*:

Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can choose to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus your whole nature will be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; your affections will be centered upon Him, your thoughts will be in harmony with Him.

...Through the right exercise of the will, an entire change may be made in your life. By yielding up your will to Christ, you ally yourself with the power that is above all principalities and powers. You will have strength from above to hold you steadfast, and thus through constant surrender to God you will be enabled to live the new life, even the life of faith. (*Steps to Christ*, p.47-48)

The right action of the will in taking hold of the righteousness of Christ and His Spirit. And how we do that? But you will only take hold of it when you have a sense of desperation of your need for it and your unwillingness to continue to sin and your sense of horror at your sinfulness. We can say, oh, it's terrible and God forgives me. But if we don't do anything about it, we are still hostile to God. If we don't make any effort by His Spirit. His Spirit is pleading with us, "Come, come, come, come, and talk to me." "I'm busy. I've got stuff to do. I can't. I can't. I can't." That's hostility to God, even when you're doing work for God. It's something I know very well.

So, here's another statement.

Having received the faith of the gospel, the next work of the believer is to add to his character virtue, and thus cleanse the heart and **prepare the mind for the reception of the knowledge of God.** [What is the knowledge of God? His character.] This knowledge is the foundation of all true education and of all true service.

So, if you don't have a correct understanding of His character, you cannot have a true education or offer any meaningful service.

It is the only real safeguard against temptation; and it is this alone that can make one like God in character. Through the knowledge [of the character] of God and of His Son Jesus Christ, are given to the believer "all things that pertain unto life and godliness." No good gift is withheld from him **who sincerely desires to obtain the righteousness of God.** (*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 530.3)

So, we see righteousness of God, like God in character. There's an equivalence that's taken place. So, I'm just making that connection between character of God and righteousness of God. It's the same thing.

One more statement:

... **conforming your life to the saving principles of the law of God.**
When you do this, you will have the righteousness of Christ

That sounds so old covenant, doesn't it? But again, there's fine print.

which pervades that law, because you love God and recognize His law as a transcript of His character. ... (The Great Controversy, p. 69.2)

So, there we see righteousness of Christ, transcript of His character. Equivalence; just showing you statements of equivalence there.

Let's take some steps together.

- Righteousness = Justice = Character.
- Righteousness by Faith = Character by Faith.
- A correct understanding of God's character is the beginning of Righteousness by Faith.
- Christ's earthly life is the revelation of God's character/God's righteousness.
- The Righteousness of Christ is God's character revealed.

When we talk about the righteousness of Christ, it's the revelation of God's character. That's what we're talking about. I don't know if you've ever made that connection before in your mind that clearly, but I'm just pulling these things together.

How do we obtain this character? (Now here's some of the fine print.)

1. Human nature is enmity against God and at war with His Character. (Romans 8:7)

Human nature is enmity, not at enmity. What's the difference between is enmity and at enmity? Do you know the difference? If you have two people and you're at enmity, the 'at' is in between the two people. And if you remove that, you're okay. But if you 'are' enmity, **you are** the enmity. You are the 'at.' We are enmity by nature; our very nature. Nothing God says to us in our flesh we will accept. There is nothing that God says in our natural state that we are willing to accept. Not one word that proceeds out of His mouth will we accept or tolerate. The only thing that we want in our flesh is for Him to die and go away. We were not made that way; Satan deluded us and we accepted that.

We are all like this by nature. Our natures are hostile to God. And that in itself is very confronting. "But I don't kill. I don't steal. I don't..." Accepting that; that's the thing about pride, letting go of pride. Well, you hate God and you murdered His Son. "No that was the Jews, and the Romans!" So human nature is enmity against God and at war with His character. So, our natures are at war with His character. Romans 7 tells us that. Therefore,

2. In order to bring men to faith, Christ drew near to us by taking our nature.

This is a core component of the 1888 message, that He had to reach us where we were. In order to implant faith in the human heart, He had to take our nature, slay the enmity, plant the flag to then give us the opportunity to have faith. And all of that is the healing of the withered hand so it can reach out. He re-enables the hand to reach out, which it cannot do by itself.

Audience: He did that in the Garden of Eden.

Pr. Adrian: Correct. "I'll put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed." So, He did that because He was slain from the foundation of the world. And that leads us to this.

3. This is the basis of His Cross of self-denial. A table is set in the presence of His enemies.

Have you ever gone to have dinner with someone that absolutely hates you? Have you ever sat at a table with someone that utterly despises you? Was it a good meal? Did the meal digest very well? No. There's a cross to be born, isn't there? And you're sitting there at the table and little barbs are being flicked at you. And you're trying not to react. Until someone passes you the pepper and you put pepper on your food, it hits your nervous system and then (bang!); you strike back. (You can go and read about what the Spirit of Prophecy says about condiments and spices.)

A table is set in the presence of His enemies. This is Christ saying, A table is set before Me in the presence of My enemies. Christ, in coming

into the human heart, He has to enter into a building that is hostile towards Him. He has to endure. He has to go into a burning building, and endure the flame of fury and rage (as we will see later on). That is a cross that He has to endure, because He's trying to plant this flag in the human heart, to give us a chance to reach out in faith. By His Spirit, He enters into us, into our minds. This is all through the 1888 message. and this is utterly denied, because the atonement of Christianity with penal substitution is completely different to the actual atonement of the Bible. It's a completely different mechanism that's taking place.

4. Christ has judged His Father as love, mercy, patience, grace, and kindness and equity.

That's His judgment of His Father. Because in the beginning, Satan is making accusations, yes, against Christ, but also against His Father and the Father's government. There's even a statement in the Spirit of Prophecy that indicates that Satan was seeking to win Christ to his side and how Christ refused, which required Christ to make a judgment about His Father's character. And His judgment of His Father's character is the salvation of all. Because if He had not have made that judgment, all would have been lost, including Himself. So, Christ has judged this. This is the faith of Jesus.

The faith of Jesus is: My Father's character is love. It is agape, it is giving, it is gracious, it is merciful, it is long-suffering, and it has equity. That is His judgment and that is His faith.

5. This judgment enables Him to have faith in God and receive His Word.

So, once He has made this judgment, this causes Christ to trust His Father because He knows He is love and mercy. He has not been forced to trust His Father at the end of a bayonet or a gun. He does it freely of his own will.

Audience: It's really important that we understand He did all that in His human nature; not with the foreknowledge of all His time with the

Father, He wasn't relying on that to get through. He was relying only on His experience as a human being. So He did it twice

Pr. Adrian: He did it in heaven, and then He came and He repeated it.

Audience: It had to be in our flesh.

Pr. Adrian: Otherwise you're not planting the flag.

So, what is it that saves us is not our faith. It's the faith of Jesus. "Even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 2:16, KJV) So, it is the faith of Jesus that heals the withered hand and enables that hand to reach forth and take hold. And in order for that to happen, Christ had to plant the flag of faith in the human heart to enable it to respond. Otherwise, we never could respond; we were lost, we were finished. So, it's the faith of Jesus.

6. The Father's Word says "You are my beloved son in whom I delight."

So, when the Father says that to us in our natural flesh, we say, "I don't believe you. I'm not worthy or I hate you." Either one, it's the same thing. But when Christ comes into the heart, when there is a recognition through the Cross of God's love for us and we invite Christ into us, Christ plants a flag in us that we might receive the words, "You are My beloved son." God sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts crying, "Abba, Father." And "Abba, Father" is only a response to "You are My beloved son in whom I delight." Does that make sense? This is very important.

This is the basis of the atonement. And here we come to the "laying of the glory of man in the dust." How is the glory of man laid in the dust? This is what lays the glory of man in the dust. When God says, "You are My beloved son," what do you have to do to obtain it? It's a fact, not because of anything that you have done, but simply because of what God has done. That is the basis of justification by faith, that we are His children because He created us in His agape love. And that lays the glory of man in the dust, which says "You shall not surely die, you have

life in yourself," which produces all these other problems. This takes all that away.

So, at the baptism, Jesus receives the word of His Father, "You are My beloved Son," and then Satan tempts Him on that point. So, we see at the baptism of Jesus, the justification of the human race manifested. It was the same from the very beginning when Christ was slain from the foundation of the world. But it was manifested at the baptism. Does that make sense?

Christianity teaches that justification was achieved at the Cross through the physical shedding of Christ's blood and God pouring His wrath on Him on the Cross. All of His anger towards sin, all of His pent-up frustration. People say, God didn't get worked up, but I tell you, those who kill without any reaction on their face are the most evil, satanic individuals on the planet. Someone that has no response at all when they kill and destroy and take blood. These are the most dangerous individuals of all. People say, "God doesn't get all worked up. God doesn't do this." Well, then that God is even more dangerous; no remorse, no feeling, no care. The cremation of care. 'Bohemian Grove,' et cetera, et cetera. What was that word? He has no feelings. Impassibility.

7. Christ accepts this Word by Faith and walks in it. This is the faith of Jesus.

So, when Jesus accepts "You are My beloved Son," He justified the whole human race in receiving that; because He received it in our human nature. Which is impossible for us to do because we're at enmity with Him. But once He accepted it, He slew the enmity that was between us and God, in our human nature. He obtained for us the blessing of the Father, and we are justified by the faith of Jesus.

Do you understand what I'm saying? This is so important to understand. This is completely different from what the Christian churches teach and from what present Adventism teaches. It's completely different in terms of understanding. But this is building on the 1888 understanding.

CHARACTER OF GOD BY FAITH

8. At His baptism, Christ received the Father's blessing on our behalf [Justification].
9. Having taken our nature, He slew the enmity in order to receive this blessing.
10. The Faith of Jesus is given to men by His Spirit/blood that we might have faith that we are a beloved child of God. Galatians 4:6 – Justification.

So, when that blood comes into us, we receive "You are My beloved son." We accept it. Our hearts are filled with joy. That is the cleansing by the blood of Jesus. We are cleansed by the blood of Jesus, of our delusion that God thinks that we are worthless, that we are unworthy of eternal life. All that is washed away by the Spirit of Jesus, which comes into our hearts. The Spirit bears witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. (Romans 8:16). That is the cleansing of the blood.

We believe that we are children of God. We believe that we are forgiven. And the evidence that we believe we are forgiven is that when the Spirit comes into us, we stop doing the things that we used to do. That is faith that works by love. The faith of Jesus that works in us by love, by agape.

11. The act of accepting our true identity is only done through the Spirit/blood of Christ.

"Christ is the source of every right impulse." (*Steps to Christ*, p. 26) He is the one that pleads with us to accept our sonship, not by anything we do, but simply by faith.

12. When we receive this Spirit, the atonement is made. We are reconciled to God.
13. In the joy of our true sonship, we drink of the Spirit daily and receive the character/righteousness of Christ. Sanctification.

We feel our great need. We feel that if we go into the day without having spent that time... This week, as I was thinking about these things and I went, at the time of the evening sacrifice; I just knelt and I prayed. And

I have felt this often; I felt as if I had a hand on my head, just very softly. And I felt comforted by my Father. [I prayed] "Father, I'm so sorry for what's been done to you. I want to live, but I can't do what you do, except you give me your Spirit." That's when we go up to the temple to pray, in the ninth hour, whenever we can, we stop. We feel our need. And rather than continuing to stumble and fall, and stumble and fall, we pray and pray. This is the thing that's being impressed upon me more and more; we keep coming back to this. Because as we see our characters, as we see our weaknesses and we think, "Well, now that we know what we know, now that we are part of the *Father of Love* movement; now that we know all these things, oh, I thank you, God, I'm not like other men who believe such rubbish and such nonsense."

Audience: We still fall short.

Pr. Adrian: The problem is, why do we still fall? Because shouldn't we just stop falling? We should, shouldn't we? So, there's still a problem for us, isn't there? What is that problem?

Audience: What Paul says in Romans 7, the things that I want to do I don't do. "Oh wretched man that I am." That's where surrender comes in; we really have to give up everything.

Pr. Adrian: And the only thing that enables us to give up everything is that the thought of the pain that God is going through becomes so prominent in our lives that we don't want to hurt him anymore. We don't want to react negatively anymore.

Audience: Well to be honest, we're actually hurting ourselves.

Pr. Adrian: But what motivates us? I mean, hurting ourselves – if we have no worth, we might actually be enjoying hurting ourselves. But in hurting our Father in heaven, there is a motivation to change. I don't want to hurt You anymore. That's what I'm thinking, even though that's true, we are hurting ourselves when we do that.

Audience: There's another aspect to that too – you hurt yourself to hurt them.

Pr. Adrian: Well, there's that too, yes.

14. We judge God to be righteous in the same way as Christ and by beholding we are changed. We are righteous by faith, the faith of Christ.

That will be the statement of the righteous in Revelation 15:3. "Just and true are thy ways, O King of saints." That's the 144,000, they come to that conclusion. We are righteous by faith, the faith of Christ, made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God.

This is the step-by-step process, and I've gone through it step-by-step.

So, let's contrast this with the old wineskin, just to offer a bit of a contrast for you.

1. Man has broken the law of God.
2. God's justice/character demands the death of the sinner.
3. Christ presents Himself as the perfect sacrifice, sheds His blood and satisfies the demands of the law.
4. Man has faith that Jesus has paid the debt he owes to God. Justification.
5. Man prays to God to live like Jesus and asks for the Spirit of God to overcome sin.
6. But the greatest sin of man is believing that God required sacrifice for sin.
7. Therefore, man can never overcome sin.
8. Which leads all the churches to state you can't overcome sin. Within this "gospel" they are correct.

If this is the gospel that you believe that God demands death, Jesus paid that death, he shed his physical blood, God is satisfied by that. If you believe that gospel, you can never overcome sin. *Great Controversy* calls that a fatal sophistry of Satan, that you cannot overcome. It's a fatal sophistry.

But do you see the contrast? Do you see the contrast in the two gospels? Because penal substitution is a different gospel. It's a different understanding. It's non-relational. It's legal. There's nothing for you to do except believe. But in this system, man has to have faith. He has to believe. But that is a denial of what human nature actually is. And it is a false assumption that man can believe and trust in Jesus, in himself.

Audience: It's also confidence in an appeasement, pagan offering.

Pr. Adrian: Yes, this is the problem. So, we want to take all of this now and we want to put this into Daniel chapter 8. Are you ready to do that?

The cleansing of the sanctuary is the cleansing of the soul by the Spirit/blood of Christ giving to the saints the righteousness/character of God.

That's what we've established.

The scripture which above all others had been both the foundation and the central pillar of the advent faith was the declaration: "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Daniel 8:14. (*The Great Controversy*, p. 409)

What is the central pillar of Adventism? Daniel 8:14. Now, most Adventists today consider the investigative judgment doctrine to be a fallacy and a relic of pioneer Adventism that is no longer of any need. You can reject 1844 and still be a member, but if you believe Jesus is the Son of God, you can't. Because many of the pastors don't believe it. And this is the thing, and Wieland makes it very, very clear in *1888 Re-Examined*, that the investigative judgment doctrine completely loses all power when you take the righteousness by faith doctrine of the Protestant churches. When you take their view of righteousness by faith, the Sanctuary doctrine, 1844, are all meaningless. And Desmond Ford proved that. It was all finished at the Cross. Atonement was completed at the Cross, because it is a legal transaction that mollifies and satisfies the wrath of God. And once that's done, there's nothing more to be done except simply to believe what was done. So, the whole

investigative judgment doctrine is pointless if you believe in penal substitution.

Who's that [the image on the PowerPoint slide]? That's Baphomet. That's the goat on the five-pointed star.

I saw the ram pushing westward, northward, and southward, so that no animal could withstand him; nor *was there any* that could deliver from his hand, but he did according to his will and became great. And as I was considering, suddenly a male goat came from the west, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat *had* a notable horn between his eyes. Then he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing beside the river, **and ran at him with furious power**. And I saw him confronting the ram; **he was moved with rage against him**, attacked the ram, and broke his two horns. There was no power in the ram to withstand him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled him; and there was no one that could deliver the ram from his hand. (Daniel 8:4-7)

Now, what is this talking about? Medo-Persian Greece. But the fury and the rage of Greece, where does it come from? Satan. So, what I point out in *Cleansed by the Blood of Jesus* and also *One Mediator* is that this story is the visible of which the original war in heaven is the invisible. Christ is the ram, the two horns represent Himself and His Father – the power, a two-horned government, two kings. The horn on the goat is one king, which is Satan; and he goes after Him. Why is he moved with rage? Well, enmity. And where does that enmity come from?

In the opening of the great controversy, Satan had declared that the law of God could not be obeyed, that justice was inconsistent with mercy,

Justice is inconsistent with mercy. If justice is part of the character of God and mercy is part of the character of God, then is the character of God inconsistent with itself?

Audience: No.

Pr. Adrian: So, it must be a lie. Justice cannot be inconsistent with mercy. And when he says inconsistent, justice demands death.

Audience: It's inconsistent with his form.

Pr. Adrian: It's inconsistency with his understanding of justice.

and that, should the law be broken, it would be impossible for the sinner to be pardoned. Every sin must meet its punishment, urged Satan; and if God should remit the punishment of sin, He would not be a God of truth and justice. (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 761)

I put it to you that this is the seed which needs to be cleansed from the human heart. This is the heart of the cleansing of the sanctuary. This statement: about false justice, which is a false understanding of the character of God, which needs to be cleansed from the human heart. We are deluded by Satan on this particular point. And every time somebody does something to us that is not right and we feel anger, we are seconding Satan's statement that every sin must be punished. Are we not?

Audience: It's well entrenched in human nature that we must have justice. If someone's let out of prison a little early, that's wrong, there must be justice.

Pr. Adrian: Yes, there must be justice; there must be punishment. So, like when someone is being beaten with many stripes, how many stripes should you give them? How many whips? "40 save one," for mercy. Well why not 80? Why not 20? It's arbitrary, isn't it? Punishment becomes an arbitrary thing, doesn't it? How many years people get put in prison; it's arbitrary, just come up with a number.

The condemning power of Satan would lead him to institute a theory of justice inconsistent with mercy.

And we've made it very clear that justice is mercy. Satan says, "No, justice is punishment. Mercy is letting off punishment." He has completely reframed the character of God into a different system.

He claims to be officiating as the voice and power of God, claims that his decisions are justice, are pure and without fault. Thus he takes his position on the judgment seat and declares that his counsels are infallible. Here his merciless justice [So, that means God's justice has mercy, doesn't it?] comes in, a counterfeit of justice, abhorrent to God. (*Christ Triumphant*, p. 11.4)

This is what is driving all the history of the human race; this false justice system. The fury between nations, the anger, the desire to destroy and kill is all coming from this concept of justice. So, we continue.

Therefore the male goat grew very great; [so, Satan's idea grew very great] but when he became strong, the large horn was broken, and in place of it four notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven. And out of one of them came a little horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious *Land*. [And I'm not going to go through the heavenly explanation of that.] And it grew up to the host of heaven; and it cast down *some* of the host and *some* of the stars to the ground, and trampled them. He even exalted *himself* as high as the Prince of the host; and by him the daily [the word sacrifices is supplied] *sacrifices* were taken away, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down. Because of transgression, an army was given over *to the horn* to oppose the daily *sacrifices*; and he cast truth down to the ground. He did *all this* and prospered. (Daniel 8:8-12)

So, now I'm going to give you a statement from Waggoner which I believe explains exactly what just happened here.

...we have left the matter of reconciliation just where the Scriptures have put it; and while they have much to say about the necessity for man to be reconciled to God, they never once hint of such a thing as the necessity for God to be reconciled to man. To intimate the necessity for such a thing is to bring a grave charge against the character of God. **The idea has come into the Christian Church from the Papacy, which in turn brought it from Paganism, in which the only idea of God was of a being whose wrath must be**

appeased by a sacrifice. (E.J. Waggoner, *Present Truth UK*, September 21, 1893)

That's what's going on in Daniel 8. The pagan principle of sacrifice that was in Greece, that was transferred to pagan Rome, and then was taken into papal Rome in the form of Anselm's satisfaction of justice, which then went into Protestantism as penal substitution, has come directly from Paganism; which comes from Satan's idea that every sin must be punished. And this is what needs to be cleansed out of our sanctuaries.

This is what the 1888 message was teaching. Now let's read from Fifield in the new book, *The Water of Life* – beautiful!

We have also been discovering how inadequate and arbitrary are many of the concepts that are popularly taught concerning it, and in nothing is this more true than in the teaching of the blood of Christ. The paganizing of Christianity in the great apostasy in the early ages of the church's history brought in a heathen concept of the character of God and a heathen idea of sacrifice, applying it to the sacrifice on the cross. This corrupted and transformed the whole idea of atonement and of mediation. [Do you see the point?]

In this transformation, the wonderful scriptural doctrine of the blood as the given, consecrated life—a doctrine that runs like a scarlet thread of light through the whole Bible—was lost; and in its place there came the pagan idea of the literal blood, flowing to appease the wrath of God. (George Fifield, *The Water of Life*, pp.75-76)

This is Daniel chapter 8. This is Satan exalting himself to the prince of the host and making the sacrifice of Christ an offering to the Father to satisfy Him. When really it was a sacrifice to Satan to satisfy him.

In this view, the blood of Christ means the death of Christ, a death made necessary by the demand of the Father for satisfaction for the sin of man. Man sinning deserved death. Before God could admit him to pardon and salvation, we are told, His wrath must be appeased, or His sense of justice must be satisfied. So Christ died,

shed His blood, in the place of man. All who accept this death by faith as for them are admitted to pardon and then, by some divine casuistry, are accounted pure and free from sin,

You could put in the word 'hocus pocus.' And where does that word come from? Latin for 'hocum pocum,' which is connected to the mass. They call it 'hocus pocus.' That's the Protestant ridicule of the mass, as I understand it.

or let off from the damnation that was their due. Unhesitatingly, [What? Unhesitatingly!] we pronounce this whole concept false, unscriptural, and unlike God. (George Fifiield, *The Water of Life*, p.76)

There is the cleansing of the sanctuary. That statement is the cleansing of the sanctuary. That wipes away this whole false pagan concept of the atonement and opens the way for the cleansing of the sanctuary by revelation of the character of God. Do you see that the gospel that we are proclaiming is completely different? Paul said, "If any man preaches any other gospel than that which I have preached unto you, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:8-9). Not make him be accursed, but he will be accursed because he worships a God of curses and death and destruction.

Cleansing the sanctuary.

Then I heard a holy one speaking; and *another* holy one said to that certain *one* who was speaking, "How long *will* the vision *be*, *concerning* the daily *sacrifices*

How long will this concept of appeasement through blood sacrifice and the transgression of desolation, which then went into Rome and Protestantism and Adventism,

and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot?"

With this paganized concept of sacrifice and blood.

And he said to me, "For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed [vindicated]." (Daniel 8:13-14)

And the word is *vindicated* because the word 'cleansed' in Hebrew is passive, which means it is not God that is doing this, because the verdict is with us. We are judging God and His character. Did God demand sacrifice or did He not?

Here is the English Standard Version,

And he said to me, "For 2,300 evenings and mornings. Then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state." (Daniel 8:14, ESV)

Cleansed of what? The fury of the goat, the false justice system?

How? Through receiving the righteousness/character of Christ

Conclusion: God Overcomes when He is judged. (Romans 3:4). Saints judge God as Righteous. (Revelation 15:3).

Do you see? I think I've given enough of a picture to show how important this issue is, and that we need to be presenting this to the people. Now we have the book, *The Water of Life*, and I would suggest we need to bring out the book by Donald Short, *The Cleansing of the Sanctuary*, which also says exactly the same thing. We need to scatter these like the leaves of autumn.

And, yes, at the moment, no one is listening to us. No one is interested in anything that we have to say at the present time; except one here, one there; one here, two of a city, one of a town, one of a family. But soon that's going to change.

So, thank you, everyone. I hope that that's been clear in your mind, and we shall close with a prayer.

Closing Prayer:

Dear Father in Heaven, we thank you we could spend this time looking at righteousness by faith, to see the truth of your character, that you are not a destroyer, and that we can have our sanctuary cleansed to remove this false justice system. And, Father, we will know this justice system

CHARACTER OF GOD BY FAITH

is removed when we stop whinging about the government, when we stop whinging about those around us, when we stop complaining and demand punishment for those around us, or even for ourselves, and that we will only pray and ask for mercy. Please give us this Spirit.

Thank you, Lord Jesus, for planting in our hearts the truth that we are your beloved children. We take hold of it, we believe it, and we thank you for hearing this prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.

CHARACTER OF GOD BY FAITH

This is bringing together 25 years plus of research. And we might say, as Paul did at the beginning of Hebrews chapter 8, “Of all that we have said, this is the sum” – *Character of God by Faith*. We trace through some of the history on this subject, connecting character of God to righteousness, because I’m substituting the words *character of God* for the word *righteousness*. Is that a fair substitution? Find out in this presentation. And connecting this to the heart of Adventism, which relates to the cleansing of the sanctuary. We must always come back to this particular issue of the cleansing of the sanctuary. We shall look at some statements and reflect and seek to go line by line as we look at this.