

Zahakiel: Let's begin. Pastor, please offer an opening prayer.

Pastor Chick: Dear Father in Heaven, we thank You for the gift of life and the abundant life of health and peace. We ask for a special Sabbath blessing as we worship you in spirit and in Truth. We expect a fresh baptism of Your Spirit for this hour in Yahshua's holy name, Amen.

Adriel777: Amen

Barb: Amen

daphna dee: Amen

Zahakiel: Amen.

Lucan: Amen

Elyna: Amen

Peter: Amen

Martha: Amen. Happy Sabbath

Naraiel: Amen

Zahakiel: Happy Sabbath to everyone. Tonight's study is called "The Illusion of Need." The Scriptures contain this interestingly-worded passage from one of Paul's epistles, in which the first verse is often quoted, but the rest of it rarely the subject of commentary:

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of Yah; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Yahshua [...] Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." (Rom 3:23, 24, 27, 28)

In that passage from Romans, we see Paul speaking of faith, and explaining that boasting due to works is excluded, literally "shut out" or "turned away," from the experience of the believer. Many have read this and similar verses, and drawn the faulty conclusion that it is the works themselves that are excluded from the life of faith. They reason, "When I do work, I know I have accomplished something, and therefore if any work at all is involved in the Christian life, I would have a tendency to boast about it. Since work that is accomplished leads to boasting, works can have nothing to do with faith at all." I have heard such ideas expressed by professed followers of Yahshua over the years, and I recall one individual saying specifically, "I don't need to quit smoking and drinking to be a born again Christian; my actions have nothing to do with my faith."

What is happening in that line of reasoning is that those who think this way see the works as means to an end. They see the works as a way of accomplishing something for themselves; therefore, when they do something they consider to be a "good work" they believe that they have become more holy, better Christians, or at least more practiced at faith. They have adopted the evolutionist mindset that over time, with creature-based effort, the quality of spiritual life can be improved.

What the Scripture says is not that works of faith are excluded, but rather that the boasting that arises from works is excluded, and the reason for this is because the works of the Christian faith are not ours at all; they are rather our Father's work done IN us. Furthermore, the works are not designed to accomplish anything for us, as if our lives are to be valued by their presence.

The Scripture says of works, "For we are [Yahweh's] workmanship, created in Christ Yahshua unto good works, which Elohim hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph 2:10)

We see, then, from these verses that works are not the "means" of the Christian life. We do not become Christians, or better Christians, or perfect Christians, through the performance of good works. Instead, the works are the result of the faith; they are the "ends" rather than the "means," and because they are Yah's work that arises from Yahshua's faith in us, we have nothing about which we may boast. Boasting is excluded.

The works of Christianity are not the result of our physical, mental, or spiritual merit; they do not originate in us, and neither do they end with us. The works that the Christian does have been fore-known, and prepared for us by our Father to accomplish, from the very beginning.

We read, "We which have believed do enter into rest, as He said, 'As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest:' although the works were finished from the foundation of the world." (Heb 4:3)

The works we do are the result of us choosing to abide, to rest, in the principles of our faith; and I do not say that when we understand the principles we are "enabled" to do the work; this is not what it means to live by principle, for the reality is a bit different from that.

We are to abide in, to live by, those principles of righteousness that Yah has revealed to us; that is our only responsibility in relation to works. We accept them as true and part of our Father's character. When we do this, as all who have Christ in them do, the works are presented before us, and performed through us, as the inevitable consequence of our beliefs.

Suppose we lived by the principle (and I am sure we do) that babies, small children, should be prevented from coming to harm. If we were to come across a child on the side of the road, and some stranger were to come up and begin to strike the child, would we be able to simply walk past and do nothing? While we can technically, theoretically, choose to do so because we are not creatures of mere instinct, because of our beliefs, in practice we would be compelled to act. We are compelled, more than we are enabled, by what we believe to be true.

Similarly, when the righteous path in any matter is set before one who is committed in Christ to righteousness, the Spirit rises up in him, and he is simply compelled to act. There

is no praise for acting, or rebuke for inactivity... obedience to the will of Yahweh is simply the outpouring of his faith into the world.

Before I was a Seventh-day Adventist, I did not know about the Sabbath. It played no part in my plans, in my actions, and therefore in any of my works. When I learned about the Seventh-day, and chose to believe that Yah did rest on that day from His works, and had invited me to enter into that rest even in the age of grace following the Cross, it became a part of my life, my experience, and my character. When Friday evenings come around now, I do not reason within myself, "Oh, it is almost the Sabbath... well, I have a choice to make! Will I continue to do my own works and pleasure, or will I rest according to the commandment?" I do not have that choice to make in the moment, because I have already chosen to enter into the faith of Yahshua, and I understand that the Sabbath is a part of that faith.

The choice being made already, I can "rest" in the life that Yah has given me, and my actions (if keeping the Sabbath holy is to be considered a 'work') spring forth as naturally as an olive tree produces olives. In the sense that the choice has been made already, and I am merely abiding by it, I am a "servant to righteousness. In the sense that when the choice was made, it was mine and mine alone to make, I am "free indeed" in Christ, and not bound to anything contrary to my God-given individuality, freedom, and will. There is the balance of freedom and service to an all-mighty Creator.

As an SDA, I did not know about New Moons. When I became a CSDA, and understood that they were a part of the faith of Yahshua, then it became natural for me to observe New Moons. When the New Moon approaches, again, I do not have a choice to make on any conscious level, thinking, "Should I keep this New Moon, or should I ignore it?" The choice to keep each Sabbath, and each New Moon, has already been made when I accepted the Faith of Yahshua, and the keeping of it comes forth naturally, as water from a stream. It becomes natural to plan my weeks around the Seventh-day blessing, and it becomes natural for me to plan my months around the Lunar blessing. These are not choices I am making in the moment; they are the result of a choice made years ago, and a fulfillment of the works that my Father has prepared for me from even before that, even "the Beginning."

Should I boast about this, my obedience? No... boasting is excluded.

No human being, neither any circumstance, can force me to be untrue to my word, because my word in this is Christ's own Word, given in His power, by His own faith, lived out in my flesh. With all the responsibility for accomplishing these things belonging to my Father, all rest is mine, and all boasting (that is, all glory) is His.

Adriel777: Amen

Zahakiel: This is a great joy to know, a great relief, a great "rest" from what the world thinks of as "religion." This process is identical for everything that is considered to be a "work" of the Christian faith, from dress, to diet, to manner of speech and conduct. Our

sanctification is in the learning more and more deeply of righteousness, of becoming more familiar with the principles that have prepared us for Yah's good work in us, and then to agree that yes, they are a part of the faith I have already accepted... yes, they belong to the life that Yah has given me – and they always have.

Adriel777: Amen

Zahakiel: The life that we now live does not become "harder" because the path becomes more narrow; it is our understanding that narrows, that becomes more focused on Christ as we see His blessed character more clearly; but the works remain His in us, and the faith remains "perfect" according to our ever-increasing level of understanding.

The idea of not-accomplishing, or failing, to do a work does not enter into the picture at all, for Yahweh (who prepared the work for us) cannot fail, neither can Yahshua (who accomplishes the work in us by His faith) fall short. It is impossible, then, for the Christian to miss the mark. As John says it, we "cannot miss the mark," (1John 3:9) which is the literal translation in the New Testament of "sin."

These are not mere words, nor dusty doctrine... in we who accept them, they become life, and personality, and the divine character. The truth that those who abide in Christ, and in whom Christ abides, do not commit sin is actually not a "New Testament" doctrine at all. We may think of it this way, because it has become clearer through the lens of the Cross, and the apostles wrote of it in direct terms. But the victorious life was known, and lived, by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by Moses and by Joshua. It was known, and lived, with perfect insight, by Enoch, Elijah, and others whom we shall shortly meet. It is known this day, and lived in the brightest light ever, by the 144,000.

Adriel777: Amen

Zahakiel: We are speaking about the works Yah has prepared for us from the very beginning. As long as the Sabbath has existed, mankind has been invited to rest in the work that the Father has already done, and to choose to believe in His care, promises, and perfect victory.

Was it not so from the very beginning, even before sin entered the human experience?

Yah rested on the Seventh Day, and invited the man, whom He had created, to rest in all His "very good" works. That is the first and purest expression of victory over sin, for no work of Satan, and no work of fallen humanity, had a place in that celebration. Today, and every Sabbath, we are invited into a blessing in which no work of Satan, and no work of fallen humanity, has any place. Salvation is not about works we now do, but the importance of Yah's gifts, and particularly the gift of His sacred day, is that we enter into a blessing that reveals to us the sanctified life without sin, so that we may go forth into the world, into the week, with His glory surrounding us. We need this no less than we need water and air.

Consider, therefore, if the works come from the Father, and the faith that provides us with these works comes from the Son, then what do we need in order to accomplish these works? Here we come to the reason for the name of our study, "The Illusion of Need."

We are missing something, after all, as a collective people.

Every human has a heavenly Father, a God who has created perfect works for him to do from the foundation of the world. Every human has a Savior, a Substitute and Lord whose grace has appeared to him, offering him perfect faith so that he may choose to live the sanctified life and witness Yah's perfect work done through him. He, like each prepared work, is called "Yah's workmanship," (Eph 2:10) and is therefore a co-work (not co-worker, but co-work) with the work he accomplishes. Boasting, again, is excluded, because we are merely (but freely, and joyfully) doing what we were created to do.

Then what is a Christian, and what is a CSDA? Simply stated, it is a human being who understands this, and has been translated by the power of Yahweh into the state for which he was originally created and intended. Each human has work created for him to do, and the faith by which to do it, provided by the Father and Son, respectively. And yet, we know quite clearly that not every human being enters into the life that has been prepared for him.

The difference, then, between the Christian and the world-ling is the presence or absence of the Holy Spirit, that is, the spiritual presence or absence of the Father and Son. When faith is accepted, when the Father and Son dwell within us, for it is They who represent Themselves as this Holy Spirit, (John 14:23, John 14:18, 1John 2:1, 1Tim 2:5, 2Cor 3:17, etc.) Then what do we lack? Nothing – not one thing beyond what They have already given.

To build a house, one needs material... wood, concrete, etc. To build a house by faith, one still requires these physical elements, but they are provided by the One who prepared the work for us in the first place, and revealed to us – that is, brought to our attention and under our power – by the One whose Faith inspired us to build it. Nothing is needed beyond what the Father has prepared and the Son has provided.

To walk a mile, one needs a body in reasonable health. To walk a mile by faith; that is, to walk a mile because Yah prepared that work for us from the foundation of the world, we rest in what the Father has already given us, and what the Son then gives us: the will and the power to accomplish.

To raise a child, to have a ministry, to live the Christian life, these all require resources – and some of them require resources that are simply not available to the one who lives according to the flesh.

But the born-again believer, who does all these things by faith, he has all the resources he needs, and has them in abundance. The Redeemed walk according to the choices they have already made, and with the works the Father has accomplished for them as the

"ends" of their faith; thus, they have neither worry nor boasting. Both worry and boasting point to the "self," and they are excluded because self is excluded. The works of both the natural man of the flesh and the super-natural demon are excluded from the Sabbath rest, because again, the Sabbath was made to celebrate Yah's works, and neither of these things were made by Yah. Instead, they arose from sin, and the Sabbath has become a sign of victory over sin.

What is the conclusion, then? It is that we need nothing that the Father has not provided for us, and the Son has not brought under our authority. The Christian may rest, and rejoice, that he has already chosen to receive everything he needs for the works that Yah has prepared for him. As he does them, or rather, as he agrees with and observes the Father doing the work in Him, he works with care, but not fear of failure. He succeeds with rejoicing but not boasting in self. He may exert great effort to bring into the world the vision of excellence that Yah has shown him, but he does so with a spirit of rest and utter trust in the path he walks.

All who speak of "need" beyond what the Father and Son have provided have been taken captive by the illusion that Satan has tried, from the beginning, to cast – that the Law is impossible to fulfill, and that its requirements are unreasonable. The idea that the Father would ask, or demand, that we do something we have no way to do, or that He has not already provided us with all means to accomplish, is one that comes directly from the Enemy of our souls.

Our Father has told us to "be perfect" in faith and in character. (Mat 5:48) The apostle James links this directly to what we need, saying, "But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." (James 1:4) What Yah has said, His very Word makes manifest; this is no less true of the perfect life of the believer than any other miracle. What manner of people ought we to be, asks the Apostle, (2Pet 3:11) who live according to this Word, and look forward to the final, dramatic fulfillment of these promises?

Let us be bold in our testimony of the faith we have accepted, even as we have chosen to do already from the moment we were born again. Let us bear this testimony, so that the world may see, so that a light may shine in the darkness, and so that the Sabbath rest that is the symbol of our victory may be set before the eyes of those who have hitherto only seen the works of the flesh, so that they may know the Father and Son who provided for them all that they will ever need, and who have a thousand ways of maintaining us in Their perfect word of which we need not even be aware, but in which we need only to trust with childlike innocence.

There are many, many, in the valley of decision today regarding their eternal destinies. Let us go down into the valley, as Enoch once did, bearing this Gospel, too and seek them out with an invitation to set aside their worldly cares, to reject the illusion that they need something the Father and Son have not already provided for them, and to "come up hither." (Rev 11:12)

Are there any questions or comments on tonight's study?

Adriel777: Amen

Martha: Amen

Zahakiel: If there are none, then I'll ask Bro. Luke to offer the closing prayer.

Lucan: Dear heavenly Father. We thank you for providing all that is necessary for the perfect reflection of your character. You have told us that you will provide all our needs; and, that you have given us all things pertaining to godliness. We thank you for hearing and providing for the earnest desire of our hearts; to be like you in Spirit and in truth. We thank you that, so much more than "like" you, you have given us Yourself through your Spirit, to abide in us forever. As we rest in Your completed works this Sabbath, may we be blessed with ever greater insight into the character you have bestowed on all who will receive it. In the name of Yahshua we pray, amen.

Pastor Chick: Amen.

Zahakiel: Amen.

Peter_Jr_18: Amen.

Adriel777: Amen

Elyna: Amen

Barb: Amen

Ruthline: Amen

Peter: Amen

Martha: Amen