



[1 John 4:17](#)

(17) Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.

New King James Version

The phrase, "As He is so are we in this world," merits a second look. [Ephesians 1:3](#) provides a similar illustration, "Blessed be the [God](#) and Father of our Lord [Jesus Christ](#), who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ." Both statements say that Christ stands in place of us, another astounding aspect of God's [grace](#). This is especially astonishing in that, if we consider ourselves soberly, we see weak, sinful human beings who have experienced many failures. By contrast, Christ was perfect in every aspect of life.

God is realistic in His perception of us. He does not fantasize when observing Mr. Smith or Mr. Jones, deluding Himself into thinking that He is looking at Christ. No, He literally sees Mr. Smith or Mr. Jones, but the converted are only accepted before Him because of Jesus Christ, because they bear His righteousness and because He lives in them. No man is accepted before Him on the basis of his own works of righteousness. Paul writes of the righteousness that enables us to be accepted before God in [Philippians 3:8-9](#):

But indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through [faith](#) in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith.

Paul comments on this righteousness again in [Romans 3:21-22](#): "But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the [Prophets](#), even the righteousness of God which is through faith in Jesus Christ to all and on all who believe." This faith is imputed, accounted to us because of our faith in Jesus Christ when we possess no righteousness to gain us entrance or acceptance

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before God.

We can thus enter God's throne room and talk to Him because of Jesus Christ, and He accepts us before Him as if we were Jesus. If we extend this principle out into other aspects of Christian life, we can see that we always have the life and sacrifice of Christ preceding us as we walk the path to the [Kingdom of God](#). This is why we can be bold: God accepts us on the basis of Christ's life and sacrifice.

We are all very concerned about [sin](#). The concern to avoid it is good, but to be in great anxiety over it is not good. Some would be astonished to learn that God is less concerned about individual sins than He is about the overall trajectory of our lives. Showing consistent growth has a higher priority with Him than any individual sin committed out of weakness.

[Galatians 5:6](#) says, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through [love](#)." Consistent growth will be shown in the lives of those who live by love motivated by faith. The unstated but nonetheless overriding purpose of the offerings of Leviticus is to teach us the qualities needed to love God and fellow man. It is total devotion and sacrifice in keeping the commandments of God.

We cannot do this unless the closeness of our identification and union with Christ is a day-to-day reality and thoroughly understood by us. Our union with Him is incredibly close, as God perceives it. If anything can give us confidence in living life before God and [the world](#), it ought to be our ability to perceive how we stand before Him.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[The Offerings of Leviticus \(Part Eight\): Conclusion \(Part One\)](#)

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