

The Christian Lie That Keeps You Feeling Not Enough

Living from Righteousness, Not Toward It

Rev. Michael Angel

<https://springsofrevival.com>

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Living as a Child of the New Covenant)

- Do you ever feel like no matter how much you pray, serve, or read your Bible, a voice inside still whispers that you're not quite enough for God?
- That you're always in a state of 'becoming' worthy?
- Always on the journey, but never arriving? Always
- striving, but never, ever, truly measuring up?

This isn't just a fleeting feeling, is it? For so many of us, it's a constant, low-grade hum of spiritual anxiety.

It's that whisper in your soul that says you'll never measure up for a holy God. You confess your sin, but the shame just clings to you.

You serve in the church, but you feel like a total imposter. You read God's promises of love, but you secretly suspect they apply to everyone else—or at least, they'll apply to you later, once you finally get your act together.

This is the lie of the 'becoming' mentality.

It's one of the most pervasive, exhausting, and damaging lies in the Christian faith, and it turns the

glorious freedom of the gospel into a crushing weight of religious performance.

But here is the truth that can and will change everything: your faith was never meant to be about becoming worthy of God. It has always been about resting in the fact that, in Christ, you already are. Breaking free from this one lie will change your faith forever.

Section 1: The Anatomy of the Lie

This lie, this “becoming” mentality, is a subtle poison. It doesn't announce itself. It just creeps into the quietest corners of our spiritual lives and re-wires how we relate to God.

So let's diagnose it. Let's give it a name and drag it into the light, because only when we see it clearly can we begin to dismantle it.

First, it poisons our prayer life. For someone trapped in the becoming mentality, prayer feels less like a conversation with a loving Father and more like a performance review with a demanding boss.

You feel this unspoken pressure to “clean yourself up” before you can even approach God.

You mentally rehearse your failures, you come to Him with a list of apologies, hoping you've covered all your bases so that He might, just might, listen.

Your prayers become a litany of "I'm sorry for not doing enough, I'll try harder." It's an exhausting cycle of guilt and resolution, driven by the fear that if you don't perform well enough in your confession, you'll stay at a distance from God.

The joy of simply being with your Father is replaced by the anxiety of a spiritual evaluation. You're not running to God; you're tiptoeing toward a judge, hoping for a lenient sentence.

Second, the lie of becoming poisons our service. We see the command to serve, and instead of seeing it as an opportunity for God's love to flow through us, we see it as a way to prove our worth to God.

Service becomes a frantic effort to accumulate spiritual points. We volunteer for everything, not out of a joyful overflow, but out of a desperate deficit.

We say yes to every committee, every ministry, every request, because a quiet voice tells us that maybe this

act of service, this sacrifice, will finally be the one that tips the scales.

And the inevitable result? Burnout.

We get exhausted, resentful, and empty. We start seeing other people not as brothers and sisters to love, but as an audience for our piety or, worse, as competitors in a silent spiritual race.

We look at that sister who seems to pray so effortlessly, or that brother who leads with such passion, and the lie whispers, "See?

- They're doing it right.
- You're still behind.
- You need to do more."

This comparison game is a hallmark of the becoming mentality. It keeps us isolated, insecure, and focused entirely on ourselves, even when we're supposedly serving others.

Finally, this lie infects our daily life with a constant, humming anxiety. We live with a spiritual checklist in the back of our minds.

- Did I have my quiet time?

- For how long?
- Did I share my faith?
- Did I have a bad thought?
- Was I patient enough with my kids?

Every moment becomes a chance to either succeed or fail, to move a step closer to being "enough" or fall further behind.

We're living on a spiritual treadmill—running as fast as we can, pouring sweat, heart, and soul into the effort, only to look up and realize we haven't moved an inch.

The finish line, that point where we finally feel secure, seems to just keep moving further away.

So where does this faith-destroying lie come from?

It comes from a fundamental misunderstanding, a great spiritual mix-up. We've taken two completely different systems for relating to God and tried to blend them.

It's like trying to run a computer on two different operating systems at the same time.
The result is always a system crash.

Specifically, we've mixed the Old Covenant of Law with the New Covenant of Grace.

We've taken the conditional, performance-based rules of the old system and tried to shoehorn them into the unconditional, gift-based reality of the new.

The Old Covenant said, "IF you do this, THEN God will bless you."

The New Covenant says, "BECAUSE of what Christ has done, you are blessed, THEREFORE you can live this way."

One is a system of doing to be accepted; the other is a system of living from acceptance.

Trying to live in both at once creates a toxic faith where we're constantly striving to earn what we've already been given for free.

To break free, we have to understand the system we were never meant to live under.

Section 2: The Old System - A Treadmill of Trying

To truly appreciate the radical freedom we have now, we have to understand the old system: the Old Covenant given to Israel through Moses.

So many of us are living under its shadow without even knowing it.

We think its principles of performance are just how God operates. But the Bible tells a very different story. The Old Covenant wasn't God's final plan for relating to His people; it was a temporary guardian, a tutor designed to teach us one profound lesson: you can't do it on your own.

The Old Covenant, the Law of Moses, ran on clear, conditional obedience. In Deuteronomy 28, God sets before Israel a stark choice: blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience.

"If you fully obey the Lord your God... all these blessings will come on you." And then, "However, if you do not obey... all these curses will come on you."

It was cause and effect.

Your performance directly determined your outcome. This is the very mindset that fuels our "not enough" feeling—this intuitive belief that if we just "do" enough good things, we'll earn God's favor.

But here's the critical point the Apostle Paul makes again and again: God never intended for the Law to be the way we make ourselves righteous.

Its purpose was the exact opposite.

Romans 3:20 says it plainly: "no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin."

The Law wasn't a ladder to climb up to God; it was a mirror to show us how dirty we were. It was a perfect, holy standard that no imperfect human could ever hope to keep.

Think of it like a medical diagnostic tool. A CT scan can give you a perfect, detailed image of a tumor. It reveals the problem with stunning accuracy.

But the scan can't cure you. It has no power to remove the cancer. In the same way, the Law was God's perfect diagnostic tool. It exposed the cancer of sin in our hearts.

In fact, Paul takes it a step further in Romans, saying the law was brought in "so that the trespass might increase."

The very presence of a rule like "Do not covet" actually awakens the desire to covet inside us. The Law, while good, proved beyond all doubt that a righteousness based on human effort was a lost cause.

This reality was physically demonstrated in the Old Covenant's worship.

Access to God was severely restricted. Only priests could enter the Holy Place. Only the High Priest could enter the Most Holy Place, and only once a year, and never without the blood of a sacrifice. The entire system was built on repeated, temporary sacrifices for sin. The book of Hebrews tells us these sacrifices were a constant, yearly reminder of sin, not a final removal of it.

The work was never, ever finished.

Can you see how this creates a "becoming" mentality? If the sacrifice only covers you for a time, if the work is never done, then you're in a constant state of striving.

You're always conscious of your sin, always aware of the veil separating you from God's presence. This system, by its very design, reinforces the feeling of being "not enough."

It was a treadmill of religious activity that could never bring a person to a place of perfect peace or full acceptance.

It was designed to make humanity cry out for a savior. It was meant to be a placeholder, a shadow, until the reality it pointed to finally arrived.

The Old Covenant was the question to which Jesus Christ is the final, glorious, and complete answer.

The lie we've believed is that we're still living in the shadow, still bound to the treadmill.

The truth that sets us free is that the real thing has come, the work is finished, and a New Covenant has dawned.

Section 3: The New Reality - The Finished Work of Grace

If the Old Covenant was a story of human effort and failure, the New Covenant is the story of God's divine intervention and finished success.

This is the great turning point of history, and it's the turning point for your faith. It's the moment we stop

looking at our own performance and start looking at Christ's.

The New Covenant, established by the blood of Jesus, isn't an update or a "version 2.0."

The book of Hebrews calls it a better covenant based on better promises.

It's a total replacement. It doesn't operate on "if you obey," but on the declaration "it is finished."

To break free from the "becoming" lie, we have to soak our minds in three foundational truths of this New Covenant.

First: Righteousness is a Gift, Not a Goal.

The first and most staggering truth is that righteousness—that feeling of being "enough" before God—is not something we achieve. It's something we receive.

Paul says in Romans 5:17, "how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!"

Let that sink in.

We don't earn, work for, or build up righteousness. It's handed to us as a gift. Think about it: you would never work to earn a gift.

The moment you offer payment, it stops being a gift and becomes a wage. For years, you've been trying to earn something from God that He has been trying to give you as a free, no-strings-attached gift.

And what's the result of receiving this gift?

Paul says we will "reign in life."

This is the polar opposite of feeling "not enough."

This isn't about scraping by spiritually; it's about exercising authority over sin and darkness right now, in this life. The "becoming" lie makes you a slave to a taskmaster.

The truth of the gift of righteousness makes you royalty.

You get off the treadmill of performance not by trying harder, but by simply stopping, turning, and receiving the gift that's been held out to you all along.

Your righteousness isn't a future goal; it's a present reality.

Second: Your Identity IS Righteous, Not 'Becoming' Righteous.

This is where the truth gets even more personal. The gift of righteousness isn't just something you have; it's who you've become.

This is the truth that deals the death blow to shame. In 2 Corinthians 5:21, Paul gives us maybe the most explosive summary of the gospel in all of Scripture: "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

This is the Great Exchange. On the cross, Jesus didn't just carry our sins; He became sin.

He was treated by God the Father as if He had lived your life, absorbing the full penalty you deserved. In exchange, when you trust in Him, God treats you as if

you lived Jesus's perfect life. You "become the righteousness of God."

Notice the verb: "become."

But unlike the lie of constant striving, this is a one-time, definitive, past-tense event. The moment you were saved, you became something new.

It's a legal declaration from the judge of the universe. When God the Father looks at you, He doesn't see your failures or your sin. He sees the flawless, perfect righteousness of His Son, Jesus.

This has to change how we see our sin. For someone caught in the "becoming" lie, every sin confirms their "not enough-ness."

But in the New Covenant, your identity is no longer "sinner."

Your core identity is "the righteousness of God in Christ." When you sin, it doesn't change who you are any more than a king stumbling in the mud stops being a king.

Sin is now an act that is completely inconsistent with your new nature.

We confess it not to become righteous again, but because we are righteous, and that sin has no place in our lives.

Third: Your Standing is Based on His Résumé, Not Yours.

If any doubt still lingers, Paul's personal testimony in Philippians 3 should silence it forever. If anyone had a reason to feel "good enough" based on performance, it was Paul.

He lays out his spiritual résumé: circumcised, a pure-blooded Israelite, a Pharisee, zealous, and as for keeping the law, faultless.

He was the ultimate religious person. He checked every box. And what was his conclusion? "But whatever were gains to me, I now consider loss for the sake of Christ... I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith."

Paul, the most religious man, took his entire lifetime of spiritual striving and threw it on a cosmic trash heap. He called it skubala—a Greek word for dung or garbage.

Why? Because he realized even his best efforts were worthless for earning a right standing with God compared to the perfect righteousness he could receive as a free gift.

He wanted to be found clothed not in his own filthy rags, but in the royal robes of Christ's righteousness.

This is the end of the "becoming" lie.

Your standing before God has nothing to do with your résumé and everything to do with His. You are not "becoming" enough.

In Christ, you have been made enough. The case is closed. You are declared righteous.

Section 4: Living in the Freedom of 'Being'

Now, whenever this glorious truth of grace is preached, an understandable question comes up. It's the one Paul himself anticipated: "So, if it's all a free gift, does that

mean I can just go on sinning? Is grace a license to do whatever I want?"

Paul's answer is emphatic: "By no means!"

We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?"

This objection completely misunderstands grace. Grace isn't just a pardon for sin; it's the power to overcome it.

The old fear-based system could only change behavior on the surface. But the New Covenant, powered by the Holy Spirit, transforms the heart from the inside out.

Think of it this way: if a billionaire adopted you out of poverty, paid all your debts, and gave you his family name, would your first thought be, "Great!

Now I can go rack up more debt"? Of course not! Your new identity and your gratitude would compel you to live in a way that honors your new father.

Grace doesn't make you want to sin more; it makes you want to sin less! It frees you from sin's power and empowers you, for the first time, to live a life that truly pleases God—motivated not by fear, but by love.

So, how do we practically walk in this freedom?

Here are four ways to start shifting from a "becoming" mindset to a "being" mindset.

First: Go to War with the Lie in Your Mind.

The primary battlefield is your mind. The lie of "not enough" is a deeply ingrained thought pattern.

It won't disappear overnight.

You have to actively demolish it with the truth. You must become a ruthless editor of your own thoughts.

When the whisper comes, "You're not good enough," you can't let it stand. You have to capture that thought, identify it as a lie from the enemy, and talk back to it with the truth of who God says you are.

This is a daily, sometimes hourly, battle.

Second: Preach the Gospel to Yourself Every Single Day.

This is your main weapon. You can't afford to let the gospel be a Sunday-only thing.

When you wake up and that feeling of inadequacy washes over you, you must declare, out loud if you have to: "I am the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. There is now no condemnation for me. I have received the gift of righteousness, and I will reign in life today through Him."

This isn't just positive thinking; this is reminding your soul of its unbreakable, blood-bought reality. The enemy lies to you all day long; you have to be more persistent in telling yourself the truth.

Third: Change How You Pray.

Your prayer life is where you'll see this transformation take root.

Stop approaching God as if you need to earn His attention. Start your prayers by affirming your position.

Instead of, "God, I'm so sorry I failed again," start with, "Father, thank you that I can come boldly to your throne because of Jesus. I come to you not based on my performance, but on His finished work.

I am your child, accepted and secure in Him."

This changes everything. It frees you to be honest. Your prayer closet transforms from a courtroom into a family room.

Fourth: Serve from an Overflow, Not for an Outcome.

Finally, re-evaluate your motives for serving. Before you say "yes" to another commitment, ask yourself: "Am I doing this to get something from God—approval, a sense of worth? Or am I doing this because I am so full of the love He's already given me that it has to spill out onto others?"

True, New Covenant service is an overflow. It's joyful, not burdensome.

Give yourself permission to rest.

And from that place of rest, watch as the Holy Spirit prompts you to serve in ways that bring life not only to others but to you as well.

(Conclusion)

For years, many of us have been living under the tyranny of a lie.

The lie says you're on a journey to become worthy of God's love. The truth of the New Covenant is that in Jesus Christ, you already are.

The lie has you on a spiritual treadmill. The truth says the destination has come to you, and you're invited to step off and rest.

Your faith isn't about striving; it's about standing. It's not about what you are doing; it's about what is already done.

The whisper of "not enough" is a lie designed to rob you of joy and keep you in a prison of shame.

But the blood of Jesus shouts a louder word: "It is finished!" You are not "becoming." You are. You are righteous. You are accepted. You are beloved. You are a child of the King.

Today, I invite you to stop running. Get off the treadmill.

Lay down the heavy burden of "becoming" and rest in the glorious, finished reality of who you already are in Jesus Christ.

Let's pray.

Father, thank you for the truth of your grace. For every person listening who has been exhausted by striving, crushed by the weight of feeling "not enough," I pray you would let this truth sink deep into their soul.

Tear down the lie of "becoming" and build up the unshakeable reality of our identity in Christ. We choose today to stop trying to earn what You have freely given.

We receive Your gift. We thank you that we are enough, not because of us, but because of Jesus. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.