

# The Guilty Clothed

by Henry Law

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of faith in Jesus Christ for obtaining the robe of Righteousness and being made the Righteousness of God.*

**Scripture:** Genesis 3:21, Isaiah 61:10, Romans 3:22, Romans 5:19, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Philippians 3:9

**Topics:** "Original Sin", "Atoning Sacrifice"

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## Description

Henry Law preaches about the significance of the Lord God providing garments of skin for Adam and Eve, symbolizing the spiritual robe of Righteousness that God has provided for the naked soul. This act in the garden of Eden foreshadowed the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the Lamb foreordained before the foundation of the world, whose obedience and righteousness are offered to all who believe in Him. The clothing made for Adam and Eve not only provided physical warmth but also preached the Gospel message of salvation through the shedding of blood and the atoning sacrifice of Christ.

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## Transcript

"The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them." Genesis 3:21

There is one God and one access to His smile. There is one heaven and one door to it. The Savior, who was to come, and the Savior, who is to come, is one Christ. The faith of Abel and of the Baptist looked to the same object. Noah did not preach one righteousness, Paul another. The Patriarchs did not rejoice in one hope, the Apostles in another. From first to last, all the pilgrims to the hill of Zion lean on one arm. All the voyagers, who cross the sea of life to the haven of eternal rest, are guided by one compass. How all-important, then, is the thought for you, for me--Have we escaped the many by-roads of destruction? Are we securely journeying along the one only track which leads to life?

The Lord Jesus Christ is this one way. The rays of His redeeming love burst forth, so soon as there was a sinner to be enlightened. The garden of Eden witnessed the dark sight of innocence destroyed; but it witnessed, too, an earnest of more than innocence restored. The parents of our race were not driven into the wide wilderness of the earth without a cheering prospect, and a strong comfort, and a precious promise, and a distinct hope of full recovery. The heavenward road was marked out before them in a clear map. Jesus was pictured to them in living colors.

Even the clothing made for them, and put upon them, preached the Gospel to them. Consider their case. They were conscious of shame, and blushed to meet the light of day. In their distress they sought

concealment. They contrived--human invention could do no more--a shadow of a clothing. How flimsy, how tattered was it! But God in mercy came to their relief. He supplied all their need. He made "coats of skins and clothed them."

It may be that until now you have seen nothing in these garments but a warmth for the body and a screen from the wintry blast. But be assured, the meaning is far larger. It is spiritual. It tells us of the robe of Righteousness, which God has provided to adorn and beautify the naked soul. May the Lord, by His Spirit, show this wonder to us! We gain light on the subject by examining the substance of which the coats were made. It was not leaves joined together--nor twisted bark--nor plaited roots. It was the skin of lifeless animals. Death, then, must have commenced its desolating work within the garden. But how did it approach its earliest victims? Not in the slow step of gradual decay. This was the morning of existence. Time was in its infancy. The wastings of age were yet far off. These beasts of the field must have fallen by the hand of violence.

But why? Not to supply man with food. Before the flood, herbs alone sufficed for nourishment. Noah was the first who heard the enlarged grant, "Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things." They were slain, then, for some other purpose. It could have been no unholy purpose, for God regarded their slaughter with no displeasure. This He testified by using their skins. If, then, they died according to the will of God, but not to feed man, there remains only the solid conclusion, that they were offered in sacrifice. Thus they foreshadowed the Lamb "foreordained before the foundation of the world." And hence we learn that in Eden victims bled. Yes! the first drop, which stained the earth, the first expiring groan, proclaimed in the most intelligible terms, "the wages of sin is death;" and "without shedding of blood is no remission." The doctrine of these rites is the doctrine of the Cross.

All doubt is thus removed as to the skins, which supplied man's first apparel. They were taken from the offerings for sin. Hence each sacrifice presents to the eye of faith the double sign of full salvation. Each altar casts a shadow, not only of the blood, which buys from hell; but also of the Righteousness, which buys all heaven. Such is the figure--It is indeed admirable for simplicity. But who can express the length and breadth of the truth which it unfolds?--a truth which is the very key of heaven, and the green pasture of the soul. Until we understand this, we are only at the threshold of the Gospel. Will you not, then, draw nearer with me to seek the full comfort of full knowledge?

I cannot doubt that your earnest desire is, when this short life is past, to enter into the joyous mansions of the blest. But have you robes of your own suitable for such abode? To be in heaven is to be with God. All there are beautiful in holiness. All shine in purity. All are white in spotless perfection. The eye of God rests on each with delight. He can find no blemish in them. He counts them all fit to sit on thrones of glory. But how have they obtained this unsullied clothing? It can be nothing framed by man. Defiled hands can only work defilement. "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." It is plain, then, that if we could dwell where nothing but Righteousness reigns, we must bring Righteousness with us. It is equally plain, that we can as easily make ourselves gods, as array ourselves in unstained robes.

Who then will adorn us, that we may be found worthy? This reasoning leads us to the glad tidings of the glorious Gospel. All is provided for us in the Savior Jesus. The Righteousness needed by us, and presented to us, is His obedience. He does for us, what we could never have done. In Him we become what we never could have been without Him. He works out an infinite worthiness, that He may be to us all that His name imports, "The Lord our Righteousness." How precious is this well of truth!

Let us draw deeper refreshment from it in gratitude and faith. Behold again and again the glorious fact. One, made of a woman, has passed through human life without once straying from the path of God. The earth has seen a man pure as God is pure, holy as God is holy, perfect as God is perfect, sinless as God is sinless. He went round the circumference of the law without one deviating step. With strong wing He soared to its utmost height, and neither paused nor flagged. The searching eye of God always upon Him, could not once find the absence of heavenly love in any thought, or word, or deed. He had all trials, but no fault--all temptations, but no sin. The ground was oftentimes slippery, but He never slipped. He was assailed on all sides, but He never fell. Thus He stood before God, holding in His hands a full unbroken obedience--accomplished--completed to the minutest letter. But it was all for us! He wrought it, that He might give it; and He gives it to every naked sinner, who in faith flees to be thus sheltered by Him.

Reader! perhaps you eagerly exclaim, Are these tidings confirmed to me by the mouth of the Lord? They are! They are! Listen to His words: "The Righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all those who believe." Fully trust this saying, and all peace is yours. It is "unto all," as payment placed to their credit in the book of account. Thus when God reckons with the believer, and asks the fulfillment of the law, behold! there appears on his behalf, deposited by the hand of Christ, an obedience extensive with the very uttermost demand. God neither desires nor can receive more. So, too, it is "upon all." Hence, when the believer stands at heaven's gate, he appears in heavenly robes--the righteousness of Christ is upon him. What more can be required? It is as bright and glorious as God Himself.

I wish, indeed, that you should be satisfied on this point. In this affectionate desire, I beseech you to weigh well another Scripture: "He has made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in Him." Blessed is the man in whose heart these words take root! They are precious beyond ten thousand times ten thousand worlds. Do not they state that we--even we--who are all vileness by sin, if only we are one with Christ by faith, are made the Righteousness of God! To be reckoned righteous would be much. To be made Divine Righteousness is far more. O my soul! limit not this mercy. Rejoice in the full comfort. The humble believer re-echoes Scripture when he says, I am made in Christ the Righteousness of God.

It is manifestly the Lord's will that this provision for the soul should be always present to our adoring eye. Therefore it is, that the object most familiar to our senses--even the covering of the body--is planned to portray it. Study, then, this lesson. It is suited to every mind. The palace and the cottage alike teach it. It is as clear to the unlettered as to the learned. I would sincerely commend it to your faith and your affection; but I find that earthly shadows fall as far short of the heavenly reality, as the creature is nothing when compared with the Creator.

We admire Adam's robe of innocence. It was pure and lovely, but it was human. Not so this robe. It is Divine. The God-man, Jesus, is its Author. Adam's robe was soon soiled and lost. Satan touched it, and it crumbled into nothingness. This Divine robe is kept in the height of heaven; the destroyer cannot reach it. The skins brought to Adam would soon wax old, and perish. This is "everlasting Righteousness." Age rolling after age brings no decay; its newness is unfading. Earthly robes are sometimes of surpassing splendor. But what would be the brightness of Solomon's royal apparel beside this?--dim as the fairest star before the sun in mid-day strength.

Here I stop, feeling that eternity cannot exhaust the praises of this garment. But I have not written in vain, if these few words make its preciousness more precious to the souls of any. Reader! do you desire to possess it? Ask, and you have. Seek with earnest faith, and it is yours. The prodigal returns, and the

father says, "Bring forth the best robe and put it on him." The weeping penitent comes, and heaven's best robe is cast around him. Be wise, then, and listen to the voice which cries from above, "I counsel you to buy from Me, white clothing, that you may be clothed." What can you desire more? Here is Christ's worthiness, for our unworthiness. His sinlessness, for our sinfulness. His purity, for our impurity. His beauty, for our deformity. His sincerity, for our deceit. His truth, for our falsehoods. His meekness, for our pride. His constancy, for our backsliding. His love, for our hate. In a word, His fullness, for our emptiness. His glory, for our shame. His one Righteousness, for our manifold unrighteousness.

Happy the man, who replies, I hide myself in You, O blessed Jesus! I receive You, as of God made unto me Righteousness. He sweetly sings, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of Righteousness." He humbly adds the note of transport, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of Righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all those who love His appearing."

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