



Righteousness Part 1

The majority of today's believers in Christ have been so engraved with the idea that godliness is what causes God to accept people into His favor. However, Jesus came to wreck this whole idea of upholding self-righteousness, our external conformity to rules and regulations, in order to be accepted by God.

Believers in Christ associate good behavior with God accepting them, which includes all the benefits of being blessed by Him. They figure that if they want to be in good terms with God, they are going to have start getting their act together. Then, once they believe they have “achieved” this, they try to maintain being in good terms with God via their performance. This is not New Covenant righteousness. According to the Bible, this is what a true Pharisee looks like from a distance.

-What is New Covenant righteousness?

I thought you would never ask! The word *righteousness* in the dictionary means “being right with God.” However, in the Greek it has a more meaningful definition. The Greek word used by Paul is *dikaiosune* and it means, “the state of being acceptable to God which becomes the sinner's possession through that faith which embraces all of God's grace offered in the death of Christ; full conformity to God's standard of right and wrong.” The word *righteous* is the synonym of the word *justified*. Now, to put this in a more obvious way, the word *justified* means, “just-if-I-had-never-sinned despite of our daily sins.”

A great protestant reformer once said:

- “Our peace and confidence are to be found not in our empirical holiness, not in our progress toward perfection, but in the alien righteousness of Jesus Christ that covers our sinfulness and alone makes us acceptable before a holy God.” – **Martin Luther**

The good news is righteousness is not attained by your good works, efforts or godliness under the New Covenant of Grace; if it did, then that would mean that Christ wasted his life in saving us and imparting His righteousness to us because we could've obtained righteousness all by ourselves through rules and regulations. Under the Old Covenant of Law, righteousness was attained through performance and obedience to God, in other words, through the Law.

Galatians 2:21

I do not treat the grace of God as meaningless. For if righteousness comes through the Law, then there was no need for Christ to die.

-How do I possess this righteousness, if not through my performance?

Let me point you to the Bible. It's always better if I let the scriptures answer you directly.

Philippians 3:9, AMP

And that I may [actually] be found and known as in Him, not having any [self-achieved] righteousness that can be called my own, based on my obedience to the Law's demands (ritualistic uprightness and supposed right standing with God thus acquired), but possessing that [genuine righteousness] which comes through faith in Christ (the Anointed One), the [truly] right standing with God, which comes from God by [saving] faith.

This genuine righteousness comes through faith in Christ. It comes by believing. Notice this righteousness does not come through your obedience to the Law; in other words, by doing. This affirmation may be contradicting to the way most preachers are teaching righteousness today. I know because I was once a victim of wrong teaching on righteousness.

As a baby believer, I was taught that the ABC's of Christianity was O-B-D-N (obedient), which was referring to our obedience to God's Laws in order to be accepted by Him. This led me to try my best to maintain communion with God only to fall flat on my face and finally quit trying. Sadly, there are many real believers in Christ walking away from churches because they cannot maintain. Don't be fooled any longer! Righteousness is accounted to us just by believing - believing in Christ and His finished work.

Romans 4:3

For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

As a believer in Christ, you can be confident that you are always accepted by God and He sees you totally holy and pure because of what Jesus did. Why? Because your past, present, and future sins have been paid for at the cross. So don't think for a moment you are righteous only until your next sin. You have an everlasting righteousness. Let me finish by proving this statement with one of Daniel's revelations of Jesus and His finished work.

Daniel 9:24

To finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in **everlasting righteousness**.

Notice Jesus finished the transgression. Made an end of sin. Created reconciliation between God and man for iniquity. Last but never least, Jesus brought an everlasting righteousness. You are righteous forever. Since you cannot receive this righteousness through your good performance, you cannot forfeit this righteousness through your bad performance. It is a gift, the gift of righteousness. Amen.

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