

PETE BUMGARNER MINISTRIES

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RIGHTEOUSNESS

STUDY GUIDE



RIGHTEOUSNESS

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 5:20

For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 6:33

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Romans 1:16-17

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

Romans 10:10

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

I Corinthians 1:30

But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

II Corinthians 5:21

For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

THEME

Righteousness focuses upon who we are, not what we do. Righteous acts will not place one in right standing with God, but right standing with God will result in righteous acts. Jesus is the theme of righteousness. Without Jesus, no one can become righteous. Jesus is our righteousness.

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The Hebrew definition for the word translated as “righteousness” is rightness.
- B. The Greek definition for the word translated as “righteousness” is equity of character or act. It specifically speaks of justification.
- C. Righteousness is best defined as right standing with God.
- D. Righteousness takes a former sinner and makes him appear before God as though he has never sinned.
- E. Adam was created in right standing with God, but he lost his position through disobedience.
- F. For years men have attempted to achieve righteousness by works, but none have been successful. (Romans 9:30-32)
- G. The “law of Moses” was given to Israel, but instead of producing righteousness, it brought forth condemnation to the guilty. (Romans 7:7-14)
- H. The emphasis of righteousness is upon who we are, not what we do.
 - 1. What we do is very important, but our works will not obtain right standing with God.
 - 2. Righteousness motivates and produces works, but works cannot produce righteousness.
 - 3. Righteousness is obtained with the heart, not the body.
- I. Jesus is our righteousness; therefore, we must identify with Him in order to gain right standing with God. (I Corinthians 1:30)
- J. The “new birth” places one in right standing with God.
- K. Walking righteously, or doing righteous works, demonstrates the character that pleases God, His character in us.
- L. Righteous deeds are acts, or **works**, that please God. (James 2:21-25)

II. TWO TYPES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

- A. Righteousness of the law and righteousness of faith are two contrasting types of righteousness.
- B. Righteousness of the law is dependent upon keeping the law. This type of righteousness emphasizes works. (Romans 9:31; Romans 10:4)
- C. Righteousness of faith is dependent upon what one believes. This type of righteousness emphasizes believing rather than doing. (Philippians 3:8-9)

III. TWO ASPECTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

- A. "Aspect" can be defined as a way in which something can be viewed by the mind.
- B. Righteousness is right standing with God. There are two ways we can observe right standing with God.
- C. Righteousness can be observed from the perspective of relationship, or we can observe righteousness from the perspective of fellowship.
 - 1. Salvation through the "new birth" places one in right standing with God from the perspective of **relationship**. Believing in the redemptive work of Jesus and receiving Jesus Christ into one's heart results in salvation and right standing with God.
 - 2. Communion and obedience produce right standing with God from the perspective of **fellowship**. Fellowship relates to our daily walk with the Lord. We have the privilege and opportunity to commune with God daily. During this time of fellowship, the heart of the Father is revealed to man, and the heart of man is expressed to the Father.
 - 3. Unlike relationship, **fellowship can be broken easily**. One can be in right standing with God in relationship, yet have broken fellowship with the Father.
 - a. We have the assurance of right standing with God when we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior.

- b. We must be obedient and conversant with the Lord in order to maintain right standing with Him in fellowship.
- 4. Righteousness which results in eternity with the Lord comes as a result of **relationship**.
 - a. Rejecting Jesus Christ as the sacrifice for sin is the only way relationship can be broken. (Hebrews 6:4-6)
 - b. One cannot be born again more than one time. (Hebrews 6:4-6; Hebrews 10:26-29)
- 5. Righteousness which reveals the will of the Father comes through **fellowship**.
 - a. Fellowship is broken through disobedience and restored by repentance.
 - b. God does not move away from us; we move away from Him. Sin separates us from God. (Psalm 66:18; I John 2:1-2; I John 3:20-24; I John 5:14-15)

IV. RIGHTEOUSNESS THROUGH JESUS

- A. As a man, Jesus accomplished what Adam failed to accomplish, remaining completely obedient while experiencing temptation. (John 14:30; Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 4:15)
 - 1. In the flesh, Jesus defeated Satan by refusing to submit to fleshly desires.
 - 2. Jesus overcame every temptation and continually remained in right standing with God, in both relationship and fellowship.
- B. The sinless man, Jesus, identified with sinful man so that the unrighteous could have the privilege of identifying with the Righteous. (II Corinthians 5:21)
 - 1. Jesus, acting as a substitute for the entire human race, became sin for lost humanity.
 - 2. Although Jesus never sinned, God made Him to be sin for us, just as the goat of Leviticus 16 was made sin for the nation of Israel. (Leviticus 16:21-22)

3. Today, we have the privilege of identifying with Jesus and His righteousness through faith. (Romans 3:21-26)
4. With the heart, not the head, man believes unto righteousness. (Romans 10:10)
 - a. One can have an intellectual concept of God and not have a heart for God.
 - b. Righteousness is spiritual, not intellectual.

V. THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST REVEALS RIGHTEOUSNESS

- A. In Romans 1:16-17, Paul declares that the righteousness of God is revealed through the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- B. The gospel reveals that Jesus came to earth to redeem sinful man.
- C. The gospel declares the righteousness of Jesus by revealing His sinless life.
- D. The gospel declares that those who receive Jesus can share in **His** righteousness.

VI. GOD'S MESSAGE TO HUMANITY

- A. "There is none righteous, no, not one." (Romans 3:10)
 1. This statement refers to those who **have not** been born again.
 2. One who has accepted Jesus must not attempt to identify with this scripture.
 3. This scripture was recorded so that everyone would realize his need for a Savior.
- B. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23)
 1. This scripture also reveals our state of being **before** we accepted Jesus as our Savior.
 2. Sin is removed and the glory of God is experienced by those who receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

- C. “All **our** righteousnesses are as filthy rags.” (Isaiah 64:6)
1. This scripture denounces the attempt to obtain righteousness by works.
 2. Our efforts to keep rules and regulations and to do good deeds will never be accepted as righteousness.
- D. Our righteousness must **exceed** that of religion. (Matthew 5:20)
1. Religion emphasizes doing good deeds; consequently, the religious concept of righteousness is works.
 2. The believer’s concept of righteousness must be faith in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ.
 3. We exceed the righteousness of religion when we place more emphasis upon faith than works. (Philippians 3:8-11)
 4. The righteousness of the believer says, “I will do the works because of righteousness, not to obtain righteousness.”
- E. Righteousness does not come as result of works. (Galatians 2:21; Galatians 3:21)
- F. Righteousness comes by faith. (Romans 10:6; Galatians 5:5)
- G. **Only** in the Lord Jesus Christ do we have righteousness. (Isaiah 45:24)
- H. The Lord leads us in the paths of righteousness. (Psalm 23:3)
- I. We must seek righteousness; therefore, we must seek Jesus. (Matthew 6:33)
- J. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled. (Matthew 5:6)
- K. Righteousness is a free gift; it cannot be earned by works. (Romans 5:17; Ephesians 2:8-9)
- L. **Jesus is our righteousness.** (II Corinthians 5:21)
- M. Righteousness speaks through the message that it conveys. (Romans 10:3-10)

- N. We must awake to righteousness and abstain from sin. (I Corinthians 15:34)

VII. FAITH OBTAINS RIGHTEOUSNESS

- A. Abraham's response to God is an excellent example of righteousness by faith. (Genesis 15:1-6)
1. Abraham believed God and demonstrated his belief by acting according to God's instructions. His **faith** was counted as righteousness.
 2. Circumcision, which is works, did not obtain righteousness for Abraham. (Romans 4:1-12)
 3. Abraham's faith caused him to be circumcised. (Romans 4:11)
 4. Faith requires corresponding action. Not only did Abraham demonstrate his faith through circumcision, but he also demonstrated his faith when he offered Isaac to the Lord. (James 2:20-26; Hebrews 11:17-19)
- B. The righteousness of God comes as a result of faith in Jesus Christ. (Romans 3:22)
- C. Faith in Jesus is demonstrated by works of righteousness.
1. The faith which obtains righteousness is a faith that believes and acts upon the gospel of Jesus Christ.
 2. The righteous reveal their faith in Jesus by their works. (James 2:17-20)
- D. The spirit man is redeemed and immediately placed in right-standing with God as a result of faith in the redemptive work of Jesus. (John 3:3-8; Romans 10:6-10; I Peter 1:23)
- E. The body has not yet been redeemed; consequently, it is not in right standing with God. Motivated by faith, it is waiting for its redemption, at which time it will be adopted into the family of God, thereby placing it in right standing with God. (Romans 8:18-23)
1. When a believer dies, his spirit is immediately in the presence of the Lord. (II Corinthians 5:1-8)

2. The physical body of the believer is buried with the hope of being resurrected as immortal and incorruptible, at which time it will be adopted into the family of God. (I Corinthians 15:50-58; I Thessalonians 4:15-18)
3. Redemption has already affected the spirit man; it will affect the physical man when redemption is consummated.
4. In the church age, the emphasis of righteousness is upon the inward man, who is responsible for keeping the physical man under subjection.

VIII. OBJECTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

- A. The **robe of righteousness** in Isaiah 61:10 reveals what God has done for the believer through the redemptive work of Jesus.
 1. When God looks at the believer, He no longer sees his sins.
 2. Now, He sees the believer clothed with the righteousness of Jesus. We are **in** Christ!
- B. The **word of righteousness**, mentioned in Hebrews 5:13, is the subject or doctrine of righteousness.
- C. The **fruit of righteousness**, spoken of in Hebrews 12:11, relates to that which is produced from the life of an individual who is in right standing with God.
- D. The **crown of righteousness**, which Paul speaks of in II Timothy 4:8, refers to the reward of an individual who is in right standing with God.
- E. The **scepter of righteousness**, found in Hebrews 1:8, speaks of authority administered in justice and equity.

IX. SUMMARY

- A. Through disobedience, man lost his right standing with God.
- B. Through obedience, Jesus regained right standing with God for all who will believe in Jesus.
- C. The gospel of Jesus Christ reveals the righteousness of God.

- D. God's message to humanity is that all men need Jesus in order to obtain right standing with God.
- E. Faith in Jesus as the Christ is the only way to obtain righteousness.
- F. We must follow Abraham's example of believing God by demonstrating our beliefs through our actions.
- G. Although there are two types of righteousness, man is only capable of attaining right standing with God through faith.
- H. We must not forget the two aspects of righteousness: right standing from the perspective of relationship and right standing from the perspective of fellowship.
- I. Right standing with God will produce justice and equity, sound doctrine, and acceptable deeds. Ultimately, right standing with God will be rewarded.

X. CONCLUSION

- A. Righteousness is right standing with God.
- B. Good deeds will not make one righteous.
- C. The righteous will produce good deeds.
- D. Righteousness comes through identification.
- E. Jesus is our righteousness.
- F. We must wake up and realize that righteousness revolves around Jesus, not religious works.
- G. We must believe and accept the truth that Jesus' redemptive work is our only hope for right standing with God.
- H. Our spirits have been redeemed, and they are presently experiencing right standing with God.
- I. Our bodies will be redeemed and adopted into the family of God, at which time they will experience right standing with God. (Romans 8:23)
- J. In Him (Jesus), we live and move and have our being. (Acts 17:28)

- K. Let's not be content to abide in right standing through relationship only. Let's be determined to always maintain right standing with God through fellowship.
- L. We have the privilege of being sons of God, servants of God, and friends of God.
- M. Thank God for Jesus Christ! Only **He** can place us in right standing with God.
- N. Without knowledge of the redemptive work of Jesus, no one can receive righteousness.
- O. Creation reveals that there is a supreme being, but it does not reveal the identity of the being.
- P. Creation **does not** reveal Jesus; Jesus must be proclaimed!
- Q. According to Romans 10:13, everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved, but to call upon someone, you must first know he exists.
1. "How, then, can they call on the One they have not believed in?" (Romans 10:14 NIV)
 2. "How can they believe in the One of Whom they have not heard? (Romans 10:14 NIV)
 3. "How can they hear without someone preaching to them?" (Romans 10:14 NIV)
 4. "How can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful (agreeable/pleasant) are the feet of those who bring good news!'" (Romans 10:15 [Amplified]; Isaiah 52:7)
- R. The message of righteousness must be proclaimed!
- S. Righteousness **cannot** be realized or proclaimed without preaching the gospel of Jesus. **He is our Righteousness!**