

WHAT IS THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD?

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Greetings... It is such a blessing for me to be teaching further along the lines of Paul's mindset and what he is trying to communicate to the people in Rome. Before we start, let us just pray together:

Father, I want to thank You so much that we can gather around your Gospel, the message of grace, Your influence on humanity, Your power to keep Your promise, where You have come to give us life and You bringing forth that life, in the end, where we can experience today what that life is all about... by Your Spirit and not our works. Amen and amen

We are going to get right into today's message and explain what the righteousness of God is. I am walking through Romans verse by verse and we are now in Romans chapter 3 from verse 9 to basically to the end of the chapter. What we have established in the previous messages is that Paul has a bone of contention, something that he is trying to communicate. What he is communicating to the people in Rome is that salvation is by reliance upon God to keep His promise to humanity and that there is nothing special in any person's flesh. There is nothing special when it comes to man being a Jew or being a Gentile. He used the argument that he has and we proved it from Scripture where he quotes a verse that says that the just shall have life by faith. That simple word where he says that the just shall have life by faith explains justification, explains salvation, explains righteousness and so many things.

Then he goes on and he says that this passage that the prophet quoted or mentioned, or the oracle of God, is true because the wrath of God is revealed in all people. We can basically say that death is revealed in all people who do not put their trust in God. Then he points to the Gentiles saying that they have worshipped false gods and have not worshipped God and all of that started in Adam. Then God came and chose a special group of people which was Abraham and his descendants and he gave them messages showing them that salvation is only by faith. He then points out in Romans that the special people that these messages were given to was also recipients of the very same message and needed the message themselves. He goes so far as to explain that, basically, both the Jews and the Gentiles rejected God and stand in the power of themselves. Therefore, repentance is given to them through Jesus Christ where they can now repent of making their reliance on their own power and to stand by their own faith and put their trust in God so that God can save them.

We will now pick it in Romans 3:9 up and explain what Paul was saying to the Jews. Today's message is going to help you to understand what the righteousness of God is. In order to understand what it means to be righteous by faith or what it means to be **the** righteous, or what it means to be made the righteousness of God, what justification is. You need to understand what the righteousness of God is.

We cannot call God righteous by measuring God to a law. That would mean that the law is greater than God. So, God's righteousness is not something that is determined by any law. The righteousness of God is something that is inside God that no one else has and we are going to look at that. The righteousness of God is God's right or authority that He has whereby He can give eternal life. According to that right and that power unto life, righteousness in humans or to be made the righteousness of God and all those kinds of things are determined. They are some technical terms but very promising. Glory to God!

Romans 3:9 What then are we as Jews than better than the Gentiles? No, in no way for we have before proof that both Jew and Gentile are under sin.

We see that Paul proves that all were under sin by using, as I've just explained, the wrath of God saying that death is evitable. You can see death inside all people be they Jews or Gentiles. That means that there is no flesh, there is no group of people, nobody, that they have the ability, in their flesh, to attain eternal life. What does he mean when he says that all people are under sin? I am going to try and explain what sin in the flesh is.

Sin in the flesh, according to my view of the scripture, is simply mortality in human flesh. That is what I see sin in the flesh is and if you go and draw from your flesh, or your own human ability, to try and have life by your own power, you are going to find that the weakness is inside your flesh. The Greek word for sin is to miss the goal or not to share in, not to partake in, the area of man's flesh which does not partake of eternal life, is going to become evident. You are going to see it. It's going to bring forth sins.

When Paul comes and says that all were under sin, that means that sin was their slave master. It meant that all people were under the power of mortality. All people were under the power of human bodies not sharing in eternal life. Now, according to Romans 8, in order to condemn sin in the flesh, we would need sinless flesh and the Bible says that in Jesus is no sin. We know that Jesus, raised from the dead inside a human body that cannot die, He has what we call eternal human flesh that cannot sin, has no sin. And as we are in Him, we are now partaking of eternal life in a human body and therefore He is now condemned sin in the flesh through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

It sounds a bit technical but it's actually very simple. When Adam and Eve were made, they were made mortal. They weren't eternal, immortal, beings. We established that over and over in our teachings. We need to understand that Paul writes from that understanding. He comes and he says that Jew and Gentile were both under the power of sin or they were under sin and it was established in his doctrine. How did he establish that? He proved that both Jew and Gentile don't have eternal life and that they live in the fruit of the flesh. They are not honoring God. They are not believing in God. That is basically what he was saying.

If we say that sin is called the weakness, the inability of man, or more accurately, I would say that sin means the human body that is not partaking in eternal life but is still under the threat of death and has not been sealed with eternal life. That is sin in the flesh.

Romans 3:9

A) To be under sin is to be under the weakness of the flesh and its inability to produce eternal life.

Romans 7, in its context, as well as Romans 5:46 declares that sin in the flesh is a weakness and it is not something a person does. Paul says, "In my flesh dwells nothing good." He goes so far as to say that after he received the Lord, believed upon Jesus Christ and then became law minded (law minded according to Paul would be mindful of the flesh finding his identity in his flesh), he said, "Sin in me took me captive." And then he talks about sin in the flesh because he says, "In my body dwells nothing good. Who will then save me of this body of death, this body of sin and death?" So Paul is saying that there is a sin in the flesh or, "I have a human body that does not partake in bodily immortality yet. And the moment that I start to draw on my own power to live forever by myself, I find that all manner of concupiscence and death start to manifest in me."

Paul, basically said, "I was alive without the Law but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. The good that I wanted to do, I did not do and the bad that I didn't want to do, that I started doing. Therefore, I come to the conclusion that it is not I who sin but sin in me that has taken me captive and made me a slave to death... to lead me to death." The Bible talks about the death that leads to death. So in the introduction I want to say that when Paul comes and he says that both Jew and Gentile are under the power of sin, and he concludes that they are under sin, he is saying that none of them are partakers of the righteousness of God, or the eternal life that God has. No one, neither Jew nor Gentile have access in themselves, by themselves, to the life of God. That is basically what verse 9 says.

Romans 5:

5 And hope maketh not ashamed (This is the hope of bodily resurrection. Why?); **because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.**

6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

He is saying that we were ungodly. We were without strength and in due time Christ died for the ungodly. So he says, "While we were without strength... strength unto the hope that is just spoken of, which is eternal life." So he says, "When we were without the strength to have eternal life, Christ died for us and conquered our weakness. When we were without strength, Christ died for the ungodly."

Let us read verses 6 and 8 together:

6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

8 But God commended his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

He says that they were ungodly meaning they were not Godlike. Now how are you Godlike? You need the eternal life of God that Jesus has in His resurrected body today. He is like God.

But we in mortal bodies, Paul refers to here in chapter 5, he says we were not like God but we were without the strength that is needed to have eternal life. But He came and died for these sinners, the ungodly, strengthless unto eternal life, people. So when we are under sin, it simple means that we are mortals. So many times we felt so guilty when we think of sin in the flesh, actually rejecting ourselves, hating ourselves, living at a place where we think that there is something very ugly inside us. No! There is nothing ugly inside you! It is not ugly to be weak to eternal life. God from the beginning has come and promised eternal life to you. If God made the promise of eternal life to you, it means that you did not have it. You needed it! So God didn't look in a negative way at people that are mortal. The problem is when we engage our mortality to produce immortality. That's where the problem comes in that brings devastation and death into manifestation.

So what that means, and this is the point I am trying to make, that Adam was made, Adam was a mortal being. There's a long debate that we can still have about that and why it is like that but Adam was a mortal being made from the dust of the earth. He was warned that there was a threat of death over him that he does have the ability to die and that he should, basically, eat of the tree of life and so live forever. Adam did not do that and we find that Adam engaged mortality and found that he does not have the strength to eternal life. His body was not a sharer or partaker of eternal life. But there was a promise of God, made towards man, that God promised and said, "I will give you this since you don't have that yet." It was in God's plan to bring it forth in man. All that man had to do is to believe and rely and trust upon God. I think that is an important point. When we look at the first passage there at verse 9, we find that Paul comes and he clearly says, "I have concluded that both Jew and Gentile are under sin." How did he do it? He did it by showing them that the wrath of God or that death is in both these groups of people.

We read on to get to the righteousness of God... We can now basically see that sin in the flesh does not mean that you are a sinner. Sin in the flesh means that you have a weakness in the flesh to obtain eternal life by yourself. That is how I define it. Then, you get disobedience which would then be not to believe in God which we can also call an act of sinning. If you are disobedient, then sin in the flesh enters your life, your world. What Paul basically said in Romans was, "I was alive without the Law but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." It's basically the story of Adam in the life of Paul. He is saying, "God gave me life but I still have a mortal body. That was not the issue because I could experience life as I trust in Him, waiting for God to fulfill His promise of bodily immortality to me. As I waited and got distracted and started to put my trust and reliance in my mortal body, my flesh, I find that sin entered my world, and I died."

That is exactly what happened to Adam and Eve. Adam was a mortal being. He did not have eternal life in his flesh. Then he disobeyed God. He believed in his own power. He tried to fulfill the commands of the Law, standing in the solitude of himself. What happened? The next thing that happened was that he found that sin entered his world, the world, because he was the first Adam, and that he died. Paul's story is Adam's story. It is all of our story. That is why Jesus' story can now be our story and we need to see it like that.

Paul clearly comes and he states that all were then under sin and death. He goes on and he explains in **Romans 3:10: *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:***

Can you see what he is saying here? He says, "Righteousness and unrighteousness..." He compares it with each other. He says that all people were under sin which in the context of all the passages, he basically says that they were all under the power of death... all of them. None of them had eternal life in themselves. Adam believed that he had eternal life in himself and found that he didn't have it and then from this group of people who were under Adam's influence, God took the Jews and also by the Law showed them that they don't have eternal life by themselves. All of them were under the power of sin and the wages of sin is death. Mortality can only pay you with what it is... death itself. That is what this is all about.

Then Paul comes and he uses the word, righteousness, in connection with the strength to eternal life. The passage he then quotes is from Psalm 14:1-3 and also from Psalm 53:1-3 explaining this whole thing saying in **Romans 3:10, *There is none righteous, no, not one:***

11 There is none that understands (how to live forever), there is none that seeks after God.

12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable (unprofitable unto eternal life; Their own works, their own knowledge, cannot profit them because in themselves they are too weak. They are under the power of sin. They are not righteous. They don't have the power to eternal life. They don't have that. They don't have the right to eternal life in their own selves because they are mortal beings.

They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

13 Their throat (Their message) ***is an open sepulcher*** (grave. It is like a grave swallowing people to death. Their doctrine, what they believe, is wrong. That is where the destruction lies); ***with their tongues they have used deceit*** (I believe that Paul uses this passage for a purpose because it is talking about how Eve got deceived by the devil.); Then he said, ***the poison of asps*** (snakes) ***is under their lips:***

What is he saying? Paul is saying that they are unrighteous because they are walking in the power of flesh that's not sharing in eternal life. He is basically saying that these people are walking in what we call sin in the flesh. That is what they are doing. They are mortals. That is not a problem but the problem is walking in your mortality or making use of mortality. That is what Paul had in his mind as he writes this. To try and have life, that is the problem. Church, we need to understand that we can only understand Paul's writings from the perspective where he understood things. And that is very important.

14 Whose mouth is full of cursing (What happened when Adam and Eve sinned. He says that basically, these curses come over you. Cursed is the field because of you. Can you see that the language that was used in the Garden is what Paul had in his mind here which he quotes from, using Psalm 14:1-7 and Psalm 53:1-6. He has this Garden of Eden language, what we would call the fall of man, the deception of man, language in him and he says, "That is in all of us. There is no one righteous unto eternal life. There is no one that has flesh that qualifies for eternal life. In their flesh, no one are partakers of eternal life. They have all sinned or are "not partaking in the flesh". All of them!) **and bitterness:**

16 Destruction and misery are in their ways:

17 And the way of peace have they not known:

18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.

19 Now we know that whatsoever the law say, it says to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified (become righteous or flesh be justified with eternal life) **in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.**

By the Law is the knowledge of sin in the flesh. What happened to Adam when he disobeyed God? He got knowledge of sin in his flesh. He got knowledge of mortality in his flesh. The question would be, "Did God then make Adam a sinner?" No, God did not make Adam a sinner. God gave a mortal man, Adam, access to eternal life. That is what actually took place. But the question is so loaded because our mind and our definition of what sin is, how sin works, what Paul thought about sin in the flesh, is so far off from what Paul meant when he wrote that, that is sounds very offensive when we think, "Did God make man with sin?" All of us can say that God didn't make man with sin. He didn't put sin in his flesh. In other words, a love for evil or any of that. No! He didn't put that. We all know that.

It is simply that man in the day that he was made, according to the Scriptures, was made of the dust of the earth. He was not made of God. He was made of the dust of the earth. He was taken from the substance of the dust of the earth which we know that if we don't believe in God we were "dust you are and to dust you will return." Then He gave this dust man the opportunity to have eternal life. Now his dustiness is basically called not sharing in the eternal life of God which is defined as sin in the flesh or mortality. If Adam wanted justification, or righteousness in his flesh, another word for righteousness is to be as you ought to be, what God dreamt for him. Should he want righteousness in his flesh, if he want justification for the flesh or to be righteous and manifested as righteous in his flesh, he has to rely upon the one who is righteous, who has eternal life in His flesh which we know today is the man Jesus Christ or God Himself. So, God is righteous.

How is God righteous? He is as He ought to be as pertaining to eternal life. He lives forever and now He wants to make us righteous, give us righteousness as a free gift which means the condition that can afford eternal life and in the manifestation of that in our flesh.

Romans 3:10 is very important: *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:*

He comes and he says in verse 9 that we the Jews are not better than the Gentiles. We are all under the power of sin and death. Then it goes on and he says in **verse 10** *There is no one righteous, no, not one.* And he connects righteousness with eternal life. No one is in the condition in his flesh which can afford eternal life... no one.

I want to say that when we say, "There's no one righteous, no, not one", we always use that as a very negative thing. It was used from pulpits to tell people how bad they are, how sinful they are. But I think it should not be used in that way and at the context of Romans simply refers to man, in his flesh, cannot afford eternal life. He cannot produce eternal life. That is all that it means. So even today if you say to me that there's no one righteous, no, no one, the understanding that I would have is that it is correct because none of us in ourselves can afford eternal life. And I am not even ashamed about that. That simply brings me to a place where I would look for someone that does have eternal life, that can afford it and also produce it in someone else should you rely upon Him which will then point me to Jesus Christ. That is what I see there. It says that there's no one that understands. There's no one that seeks after God. He says that their throat is an open grave. The open grave talks about death, referring to Adam and Eve again, and their tongue is full of deceit. They are deceived thinking they can have life by their flesh which is sinful or not sharing in.

Next week I will talk a little bit about the passage in the Scripture where it says that sin is the transgression of the Law. I will explain that in 1John. There is a depth about it which I cannot do now because it will take about twenty minutes to explain that. But one thing I can assure you of is that having sin in the flesh is not something that you can do anything about. It is your makeup. You are not bad but God wants to condemn sin in the flesh. That and what condemnation of sin in the flesh is, is the only way that God can condemn sin in the flesh is by offering eternal flesh. That's the only way. That is why it is impossible for us to be saved by our works because who, by his own power, can produce immortality? No one! It is just simply impossible.

Romans 3:19 *Now we know that whatsoever the law says, it says to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty* (under the judgment of God lacking in life, including all) **before God.**

20 *Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of* (your mortality, your) **sin.**

21 But now the righteousness of God... Now listen to this: There is no one righteous. No one has eternal life by himself. No, not one. No one has the righteousness, meaning the wisdom on how to produce eternal life. **But now the righteousness of God** (or the wisdom of God on how to produce eternal life.) **without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;**

22 Even the righteousness of God which is by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all of them that believe: for there is no difference:

23 For all have sinned, and all come short of the glory of God; All have walked in their mortality and none of them, there is no person, not a Jew, not a Gentile, all have sinned in the flesh. As they have sin in the flesh and draw upon that, both groups of people, the Jew and the Gentiles, we found that sins manifested in them in their disobedience. Therefore, we conclude that there is no human being on the planet that has wisdom on how to live forever. There is no one... only God. Now God comes and He says, "I will use My wisdom in how to make somebody live forever on how to bring holiness forth in people. I will manifest My wisdom, or My righteousness, unto eternal life in whosoever trusts Me.

The righteousness of God is actually the wisdom that God has, the condition wherein God is, that can afford eternal life. That is what it is. It is the condition to be as you ought to be. God promised eternal life and He is as He ought to be to produce that. But no human was as he ought to be as pertaining to eternal life. No one! There is no person that was in a condition where he could produce eternal life and that is called unrighteousness. That is called un-Godlike and therefore even Adam had to believe in the God that justifies those who are not fully like God.

Adam wasn't fully like God. Church, we need to understand that. Adam was a being that could die but God is not a being that can die. Therefore, Adam's story is Abraham's story, is Noah's story, is Moses' story, is the Israelite's story, is the story of Jesus in the end which is our story. That means that God didn't change His mind through all of time. All the time He is being a constant God that brings love, that has kindness and has never, ever, put any responsibility on us to fulfill any Law. All that we had to do is trust Him and that was how it was from the beginning. He's never changed. Adam had to believe in God that can take a mortal to immortality. Mortality is not like God. It's unlike God yet, you don't have to be ashamed of it. Adam could be naked and unashamed. But, the moment you say, "By my own power I will live forever", then you are going to be ashamed of your nakedness because you cannot fulfill your own promise. But, Church, God remains faithful! He can still and will still produce eternal life in whosoever trusts Him. Now we can understand what it means to be made the righteousness of God. He became sin. He entered mortality and He didn't just conquer His own, but conquered all of mankind's mortality in the baptism of John and then in the death and the resurrection, He became sin that we might be made, that we can afford the condition of having eternal life.... that we might be made the righteousness of God or in our flesh, exactly like God which can only be afforded by the resurrection of Jesus. If we believe this, we are righteous in our actions.

So, what is the right thing to do to have eternal life? We believe. That's it! And now we have the gift of this righteousness. God has gifted us with His condition as that which will produce eternal life in us. We've been given this gift of righteousness by Him.

21 But now the righteousness of God (or the wisdom of God on how to produce eternal life) **without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;**

22 Even the righteousness of God which is by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all of them that believe: for there is no difference:

23 For all have sinned, and all come short of the glory of God;

24 Being justified (Go and see Romans 5:18 which talks about the justification of life, been given life) **freely by his grace** (Grace there simply meaning the power whereby He can keep His promise. We are going to see that when we get into chapter 4. Grace is actually the power whereby God will keep His promise. We are saved by the power whereby God keeps His promise in God keeping His promise. That is how we are saved from sin and death. That is how we are saved from decay. Glory to God!) **through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:**

25 Whom God hath set forth as a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

(The video sound is off at 40:46)

26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus.

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

29 Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:

30 Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

31 Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

