

RIGHTEOUSNESS

Text: Romans 10:1-3; 1:16-17

INTRO: Our texts tell us that God has a plan for making men righteous. Let us consider some thoughts on this subject.

I. ILLUSTRATE: THERE ARE TWO WAYS TO HAVE A CLEAN HANDKERCHIEF.

- A. Have one that has never been soiled.
- B. Have one that has been washed. It doesn't seem clean. It IS clean.

II. THERE ARE TWO WAYS OF BEING RIGHTEOUS.

- A. Righteousness by having never sinned.
 - 1. Infants & small children cannot sin because they are not under spiritual law.

I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived & I died.
(Rom 7:9).

James 4:17; Matt. 18:2-3

Sin is not imputed when there is no law.
(Rom 5:13).

- 2. Jesus Christ was under law but never sinned.
Gal 4:4; Heb 4:15; 1 Pet 2:22
- 3. Thus Jesus was righteous by law, by perfect works--by having never violated law.
- 4. Since we are sinners, this method of being righteous is already beyond our grasp.
Rom 3:10, 23.

- B. Righteousness by having been cleansed (forgiven) of all sin.

READ ROMANS 4:5-8.

1. This righteousness is not by perfect works. It is already too late for that!

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them" (Gal 3:10).

2. Forgiveness brings about a righteousness by grace thru faith. The faith of Romans, chapters 3-5 & Galatians, chapter 3 is not the "faith only" of the creeds. It is a system of faith as contrasted with a system of law.
3. When God forgives (remits) our sins, we are said to be washed, Rev. 1:5--cleansed, 1 JN 1:7--purged, Heb 1:3--forgiven, 1 JN 2:12--have our sins blotted out, Acts 3:19--remitted, Acts 2:38 --and taken away, JN 1:29. Thus made righteous by God's grace thru the system of faith, the gospel.

III. THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRIST'S SINLESS LIFE.

- A. The doctrine that says Christ's sinless life--His righteousness by law--is imputed to us is unscriptural. There is no verse that teaches or implies such.
- B. Sinners deserve death. Gen 2:17; Rom 6:23; JS 1:14-15.
- C. Jesus' death paid the price for our sins.
 1. His righteous life cannot be put to our account because He owed that in His own right.
 2. But His death is applied to our account, because He did not deserve to die.
 3. The initial forgiveness of sins takes place when a believing, penitent sinner contacts the blood of Christ by NT baptism into Jesus' death. Acts 2:38; Rom 6:3-5; Acts 22:16. Christ loved the church & gave Himself for it

that He might sanctify & cleanse it with the washing of water by the word (Eph 5:25-26).
Mark 16:16

4. There are also conditions of forgiveness for erring Christians. They must penitently acknowledge their sins & ask God's forgiveness.
Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:9

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