

Searching the Scriptures / 81 / What Is Righteousness? / Part 1

Today we want to consider the following three points regarding “righteousness”:

- 1. Righteousness is One of God’s Names and Attributes**
- 2. The Bible Instructs Us Concerning Righteousness**
- 3. God’s Righteousness is Everlasting**

1. Righteousness is One of God’s Names and Attributes

When the Bible speaks about God’s righteousness, it is never in vague or abstract terms. Instead, it is really referring to one of God’s names in addition to one of His infinite, perfect characteristics. Jer 23:6 declares, *“In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”* We also read in 1 John 2:1 that the Lord Jesus Christ, our “advocate with the Father”, is called “Jesus Christ the Righteous”.

Heb 1:8–9 demonstrates how God the Father has magnified God the Son (and this applies to all members of the Trinity) and acknowledges His righteous rule over the Kingdom of God: *“But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”* Here we also see a fundamental trait of the Godhead—to love righteousness and to hate iniquity.

Isa 45:8 informs us that righteousness is indeed the work of God—in fact, He has created it: *“Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the LORD have created it.”*

Job 29:14 further explains figuratively how the Lord Jesus is so closely identified with righteousness: *“I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem.”* Just as God is the very embodiment of righteousness, His blessed Word—the Bible—is likewise intimately associated with His holy righteousness, as Psa 119:172 teaches, *“My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.”*

2. The Bible Instructs Us Concerning Righteousness

One of the greatest declarations regarding the purpose and scope of the Bible is found in 2 Tim 3:16, *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”* The Greek word for “instruction” in this phrase gives the connotation of nurturing, or teaching, or correcting on the subject of righteousness.

In fact, we read in Zep 2:3, *“Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD’S anger.”* So, who are the “meek”? They are God’s redeemed children. All who have become saved will be “hid” from the Lord’s anger on Judgment Day. Mat 5:6 describes these individuals as, *“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.”*

Mat 6:33 continues, *“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”*

We must always bear in mind that no man seeks after God, as we read in Rom 3:11, *“There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.”* However, John 6:44, reveals, *“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.”* The same idea is lovingly expressed in the words of Jer 31:3, *“The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.”* We know that the Lord Jesus *“came to seek and to save that which was lost.”*

In light of this, Psa 98:2 states, *“The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.”* And where has God *“made known His salvation”* or *“His righteousness”*? Only in the Bible, God’s Holy Word.

3. God’s Righteousness is Everlasting

As God Himself is everlasting, so is His righteousness, or salvation, as we read in Isa 51:5, *“My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust.”* God’s righteousness has everything to do with His salvation program pertaining to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, as Dan 9:24 so forcefully explains, *“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.”*

God’s righteousness is always related to eternal life, as we see from Psa 12:28, *“In the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death.”* Isa 51:6 announces this wonderful promise: *“Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.”*

Have you been clothed with the everlasting righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ—the only Savior for sinners?