

The Gift of Righteousness
INTRODUCTION

Righteousness is right-standing before God. It implies innocence and holiness, moral uprightness, and a lack of guilt and sin. The word “justify” is the verb form of the same Greek word and means “to make righteous or innocent”. Someone who is righteous is fully upright and accepted before God. It is a gift by His grace **obtained at salvation** by God’s grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

Romans 3:23-24¹

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴being justified (made righteous) as a gift (freely) by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

∞The Importance of Studying the Gift of Righteousness∞

1. PEACE: We can live with the knowledge that we have peace with God. He is not angry with us, nor is He in any way working against us.

Romans 5:1

*Therefore, **having been justified** (made righteous) by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

2. LIFE: We are able to truly LIVE by the gift of our right-standing with God.

Romans 1:16-17

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who **believes**², to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “**BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.**”*

AMPLIFIED:

As it is written, “The man who through faith is just and upright shall live and shall live by faith.”

3. REIGN: Those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness will REIGN IN LIFE through Jesus. Reign means “rule”. We have the ability to live victoriously.

Romans 5:17

*For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace **and** the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.*

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all scripture used in this study is from the New American Standard Bible (NASB) Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation.

² In the Greek, faith and belief are the same word. To have faith is to believe.

- 4. MATURITY:** Begin accustomed to the word of righteousness is an indication of our maturity and puts us in a position to teach others.

Hebrews 5:12-13

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. ¹³For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to (is without experience of) the word of righteousness, for he is an infant.

Isaiah 54:14

In righteousness you will be established (set firm); you will be far from oppression, for you will not fear; and from terror, for it will not come near you.

- 5. NO WRATH:** We no longer fear the wrath of God because we have been made righteous by His blood. God is for us, not against us.

Romans 5:9

Much more then, having now been justified (made righteous) by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.

- 6. CONNECTED:** Our perfect righteous standing with God keeps us connected to Christ.

Galatians 5:4

You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified (made righteous) by the law; you have fallen from grace.

- **Severed** Greek: katargeō³; to be (to render) entirely idle (useless), literally or figuratively: - become (make) of no (none, without) effect, bring (come) to nought, put away (down), vanish away, make void.
- **Fallen** ekpiptō; to drop away; specifically be driven out of one's course; figuratively to lose, become inefficient: - be cast, fail, fall (away, off), take none effect.

- 7. RIGHTEOUS LIVING:** Because we are made righteous we live righteously. Righteous living is a fruit of having been made righteous.

1 Peter 2:24

He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

Ephesians 2:10

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

1 John 3:10

By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.

- 8. TIME TO LOVE:** Since we do not have to focus on making ourselves righteous by endless spiritual disciplines and religious obligations, and because we can walk confidently in God's love and acceptance of us, we have the ability, time, and resources to love each other.

1 John 4:7-8

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

³ Except otherwise noted, all Greek definitions are taken from Strong's Concordance.

↻ **A Few More Points about Righteousness before We Get Started** ↻

A. Under the New Covenant one can only be made righteous by faith in Jesus.

Romans 3:20

Because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

Galatians 2:21

I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.

Galatians 3:11

Now that no is justified (made righteous) by the Law before God is evident, for, "THE RIGHTEOUS MAN SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

Ephesians 2:8-10

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

B. We are the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus because Jesus was made sin for us.

2 Corinthians 5:21

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

C. The Holy Spirit does NOT convict us of unrighteousness (sin).

"The word 'convince' was a legal term meaning to cross-examine for the purpose of convincing or refuting an opponent. It involved the setting forth in a clear and convincing manner the true character of a person or thing." *Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary*

- He convicts the world of sin, but He convicts us of RIGHTEOUSNESS (and Satan of judgment).

John 16:7-9

*"But I tell you the truth, it is to **your** advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to **you**; but if I go, I will send Him to **you**.⁸" And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; ⁹concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; ¹⁰and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; ¹¹and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.*

- Those convicted of sin are those who do not believe in Jesus. THIS DOES NOT DESCRIBE CHRISTIANS. We DO believe in Him. We are not convicted of sin by the Holy Spirit.
- CHRISTIANS are convicted of RIGHTEOUSNESS!!! Speaking to His disciples who BELIEVED IN HIM, he said "you" see me no longer. WE ARE CONVICTED OF RIGHTEOUSNESS BY THE HOLY SPIRIT NOT SIN.
- It is the ruler of this world who is judged, NOT CHRISTIANS.

D. Jesus was the personification of righteousness, right-standing with God.

The Father viewed Jesus as righteous, and said twice (Matthew 3:17; 17:5) “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased”. The first time was before he had done any work, and the second time was toward the end of His ministry. The Holy Spirit is here to reveal His righteousness to you, that you are His beloved child by faith in Jesus. Jesus is the Beloved. We are in Him and He is in us.

Ephesians 1:6

To the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted (Greek word charitoo: to be graced, highly favored) in the Beloved.

E. It is NOT TRUE that our righteousness by faith is positional, but practically we are righteous by works (that we can make ourselves righteous by works).

That would be to say that what Jesus did was insufficient and that WE MAKE IT BETTER. There is only one righteousness and that is the gift of righteousness by faith. However, we know that righteousness will result in righteous living. The importance is to see that our righteous living, while a result of our right standing, does not earn right standing with God.

Philippians 3:9

And may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith

Romans 10:3-4

For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. ⁴ For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.