



GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#103)
Results of faith (#2a).

GENUINE FAITH (Unlike the FAKE.)

RESULTS in so many wonderful things!

(Whether we view them as the result of "faith" or the result of "salvation," the results are the same.)

There are so many BLESSINGS and PRIVILEGES that come with salvation – the result of a LIVING, FACT-BASED FAITH.

- It may be tempting to skip over some of the other changes that will be present, since we like the *blessings* .
- *But if the other changes are NOT present, the blessings will NOT be available!* (It's both or neither.)
- These other changes separate genuine faith from the fake.

In addition to the things we saw last time...

#3 – OUR LIVES WILL BE INCREASINGLY CHARACTERIZED BY RIGHTEOUSNESS AND OBEDIENCE!

Not only are we "declared" righteous (= "justification," which we saw last time); but we will also "pursue" righteousness!

IT'S A RIGHTEOUSNESS THAT COMES FROM GOD – NOT OF OUR OWN MAKING, BUT IN JESUS CHRIST!

... not having a *righteousness* of my own that comes from the law [human works/merit], but that which is through *faith* in Christ--the *righteousness* that comes from God and is by *faith* .

Philip. 3:9b (NIV)

The *righteousness* of God is through *faith* in Jesus Christ to all who *believe* , ...

Romans 3:22 (CSB)

There is much confusion related to righteousness, works and salvation. So we are going to take a more in-depth look at this issue.

PEOPLE ARE NOT RIGHTEOUS. IN THE PAST, WE'VE OBSERVED:

1. People are *sinners* , hopelessly *dead* in sin (though physically alive), *slaves* to sin, and *unable* to attain the righteousness that God requires.
2. Our efforts to attain righteousness by our own merit (even by observing the Law) will fail. We do it as *sinners* - enemies of God; and this corrupts everything we do.
3. Our deepest motives and heart attitudes are corrupted by sin; so the "best" we can attain is a counterfeit of what we need.

Who can bring what is pure from the impure? No one!

Job 14:4 (NIV)

It is not our purpose here to prove these issues, since we looked at them in the past. But here are some Scripture passages on this topic: Romans 3:23; 5:10; Ephes. 2:1-5; 4:17-24; Col. 1:21; Titus 1:15.

ARE WE HOPELESSLY LOST? OUR SIN PREVENTS US FROM ATTAINING A RIGHTEOUS LIFE – EVEN BY OBEYING THE LAW.

THE ONLY SOLUTION TO THIS PROBLEM IS JESUS CHRIST! GOD HAS TO DEAL WITH OUR SIN!

For what *the law could not do* since it was weakened by the flesh, *God did* . He condemned sin in the flesh by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh as a sin offering, in order that the law's requirement would be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

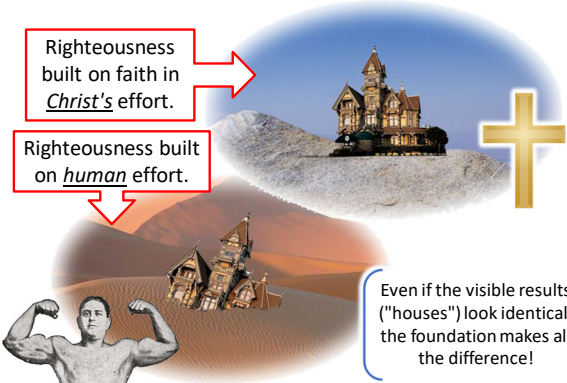
Romans 8:3-4 (CSB)

2 TYPES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS:

THE "QUICKSAND" OF HUMAN EFFORT – Everything we do is affected by the sinful nature we were born with.

THE "SOLID ROCK" OF JESUS' ACCOMPLISHMENT – We can obtain what Christ offers *only* by TRUSTING him for it.

ULTIMATELY, THE ISSUE HAS TO DO WITH THE FOUNDATION ON WHICH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS IS BUILT.



Righteousness built on faith in *Christ's* effort.

Righteousness built on *human* effort.

Even if the visible results ("houses") look identical; the foundation makes all the difference!

THE APOSTLE PAUL + HUMAN EFFORT: HE ATTAINED THE "BEST" RIGHTEOUSNESS THAT HUMAN EFFORT COULD GENERATE.

RESULT? IT TURNED HIM INTO AN ENEMY OF GOD'S PEOPLE!

This is because the Good News proclaims "righteousness through faith in Christ," and rejects all expressions of "righteousness through human effort."

Yet I could have confidence in myself if anyone could. If others have reason for confidence in their own efforts, I have even more!

For I was circumcised when I was eight days old, having been born into a pure-blooded Jewish family that is a branch of the tribe of Benjamin. So I am a real Jew if there ever was one! What's more, I was a member of the Pharisees, who demand the strictest obedience to the Jewish law. And zealous? Yes, in fact, I harshly persecuted the church. And I obeyed the Jewish law so carefully that I was never accused of any fault.

Philip. 3:4-6 (NLT)

THE APOSTLE PAUL + CHRIST'S EFFORT: ONCE PAUL RECEIVED THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST, HIS WHOLE PERSPECTIVE CHANGED!

He went from the best of the righteous, to the worst of sinners!

... I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an arrogant man. But I received mercy ... and the grace of our Lord overflowed, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

This saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" — and I am the worst of them.

1 Timothy 1:13b, 14, 15b (CSB)

PAUL WENT FROM THIS → I am without fault; I have attained my own righteousness! → TO THIS → I am the worst of sinners, in need of God's righteousness!

AFTER PAUL TRUSTED JESUS, HE WAS WILLING TO ADMIT THE TRUTH: EVEN THE O.T. LAW TEACHES THAT GENUINE RIGHTEOUSNESS CANNOT BE ATTAINED BY HUMAN EFFORT!

... as it is written:
There is no one righteous, not even one.

Romans 3:10 (CSB)

HE WAS QUOTING THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE PROBLEM ISN'T THE LAW!

The Law is good; the problem is our sinfulness. So all the Law could do was point out our sin and attempt to restrain it!

For no one will be justified in his sight by the works of the law, because the knowledge of sin comes through the law.

Romans 3:20 (CSB)

But still, the law itself is holy and right and good.

Romans 7:12 (NLT)

But I thought Old Testament people were SAVED by obeying the Law!

NOT SO! FAITH was the foundation for their righteousness!

BEFORE THE LAW WAS GIVEN: RIGHTEOUSNESS CAME BY FAITH!

That's how Abraham was saved.

For what does the Scripture say? Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him for righteousness.

Romans 4:3 (CSB); see also Gal. 3:6; James 2:23.

What this teaches us:

... to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

Romans 4:5 (NIV)

We inherit the blessings of Abraham (which God promised to people of all nations – Genesis 12:3; 18:18) when we have the faith of Abraham. The Law, which came later, did not cancel this promise (Galatians 3:17).

AFTER THE LAW WAS GIVEN: RIGHTEOUSNESS CAME BY FAITH!

FAITH AND THE RESULTING HEART CHANGES WERE NECESSARY IN ORDER TO BECOME RIGHTEOUS.

Hebrews 11 gives us many examples of people who did this. But we discover that most in Israel did not do this.

They needed to pay attention to God and his Word... but most DIDN'T do so.

Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands.

They would not be like their forefathers— a stubborn and rebellious generation, whose hearts were not loyal to God, whose spirits were not faithful to him.

Psalms 78:7-8 (NIV)

UNDER THE NEW COVENANT: RIGHTEOUSNESS COMES BY FAITH!

Today, we are not under the OLD Covenant; so its ceremonial regulations do not apply to us.

BUT WE STILL ATTAIN RIGHTEOUSNESS ONLY THROUGH FAITH IN GOD and a changed heart!

★ God's people have always had the changed hearts that he gives to make righteousness possible... ★

BUT NOW IT HAS BECOME PART OF THE COVENANT!

GOD HAS EMBEDDED WITHIN US A DESIRE TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT, and it changes our values and actions.

It's **IMPOSSIBLE** to be under the New Covenant AND have no interest in God's laws – no desire to do what is right!

IN THE NEW COVENANT: GOD'S HEART-CHANGING PROMISES (FOUND IN THE OLD TESTAMENT) ARE FULFILLED!

I will give them a **heart** to know me, that I am the LORD. They will be my people, and I will be their God because they will return to me with all their **heart**.

Jeremiah 24:7 (CSB)

They will be my people, and I will be their God. I will give them integrity of **heart** and action so that they will fear me always, for their good and for the good of their descendants after them.

Jeremiah 32:38-39 (CSB)

"But this is the new covenant I will make with the people of Israel on that day," says the Lord. "I will put my laws in their minds, and I will write them on their **hearts**. I will be their God, and they will be my people."

Jeremiah 31:33 (NLT)

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IN THE NEW COVENANT: GOD WASHES US CLEAN AND PUTS HIS SPIRIT IN US!

I will sprinkle clean **water** on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new **spirit** in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my **Spirit** in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

Ezekiel 36:25-27 (NIV); see also Ezekiel 11:19-2.

Jesus answered, "Truly I tell you, unless someone is born of **water** and the **Spirit**, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

John 3:5 (CSB)

When Jesus referred to the water and Spirit, Nicodemus, a leading teacher in Israel, would have understood it as an allusion to these Old Testament prophecies about the coming of the Spirit, and the changes that would occur.

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IN THE NEW COVENANT: THERE IS A CHANGE IN FOCUS!

Salvation and righteousness have been made available
to **ALL** the peoples of the world!

No longer is the focus: "God's people as a specific physical nation."
Instead, the focus is: "God's people as a worldwide holy nation."

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

1 Peter 2:9 (NIV)

- Many Jews do follow Jesus (Romans 11:5-6). They live by faith, just like those who lived by faith during the Old Testament era.
- As for the others (the unsaved nation), Bible prophecy points to a day in which they will repent. Then they also will have faith, changed hearts, and righteousness through Christ.

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[CHANGE IN FOCUS, continued.]

This change in focus goes all the way back to the
promise God made to Abraham!

Here is the first of several Old Testament prophecies about this:

WHAT GOD
SAID TO
ABRAHAM:

"I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you."

Genesis 12:3 (NIV)

HOW THIS WAS FULFILLED UNDER THE NEW COVENANT:

Now the Scripture saw in advance that God would justify the Gentiles by faith and proclaimed the gospel ahead of time to Abraham, saying, All the nations will be blessed through you.

Galatians 3:8 (CSB)

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OUR MISSION THIS WEEK: To consider OUR response to Jesus and his righteousness.

- We need righteousness. We can't earn it in any way, but can only trust Jesus for it.
- We need the heart-changing Spirit within us, so that we will desire a life of righteousness... and will have the type of works that God has already prepared for us.
- Our "old self" may fight us every step of the way, but in God's power, we can grow in righteousness and obedience!

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.

Ephesians 2:10 (CSB)

[God willing, we will finish looking at this issue next time!]

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