

(Christ--the Way God Makes Man Righteous) 2. God Demands Righteousness

by Denny Kenaston

God demands righteousness, not just a judicial statement, but a right standing before Him and a right living that flows out of that standing.

Duration: 1:06:22

Scripture: Isaiah 1:1-8, Romans 1:1-2, Romans 10:11, Romans 11:1

Topics: "Righteousness"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of David and how God trained him in the wilderness for seven years. Despite being chased by Saul and his men, David learned to trust God and have a humble attitude. After those seven years, God delivered David from Saul's presence. The preacher emphasizes that God demands righteousness and encourages the audience to meditate on Romans chapters one and two.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

This message is not copyrighted and is not to be bought or sold. You are welcome to make copies for your friends and neighbors. If you would like additional messages, please go to our website for a complete listing at www.charityministries.org. If you would like a catalog of other sermons, please call 1-800-227-7902 or write to Charity Ministries, 400 West Main Street, Suite 1, EFRA PA 17522.

These messages are offered to all without charge by the free will offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. I want you fellas to know that you're not the only one who has been given assignments.

Your teachers have also been given assignments. I mean, if you think your nose is to the grindstone, my nose is also to the grindstone this month. But I love it! I love it! I love to be stretched.

I love to be beyond my abilities. Yesterday afternoon, I was working on this message for this morning, and it was not coming together. It was just not coming together, and I thought, Lord, what am I going to do? And I went to bed crying out to God, God, You've got to help me.

I know there's a nugget in here, but I haven't got it yet. I haven't mined it yet, but I know it's in there. I know in my soul it's in there, but it's not coming.

It's not coming, Lord. You've got to help me. That's the way I went to bed last night.

And when I woke up this morning, that's exactly what I was praying. God answered my prayer. He does.

He does. He does. Praise God.

I was going to encourage you young men this morning to raise the level of your singing about two notches. That's what I was going to do as we sat here yesterday, but I see that you have done it already without any encouragement. And I just want to bless you for that.

We believe in wholehearted singing. We don't believe in yelling, making noise in that sense, just getting louder. But we do believe in wholehearted singing.

And you'll find as your heart becomes more in tune with the Spirit of God and the inspiration of God, you will sing louder. So, I just want to encourage you in that. It was much better today than yesterday.

We have an assignment. So, you want to write that. This is just a little preliminary here.

We have assignment. Your assignment for tomorrow. Number one, you want to memorize the definition.

I think it's number two in your list. We won't always go by the number, but it's number two in your list. The definition for righteousness.

That is your assignment. And I got my act together a little bit better here today. In your commentary on the book of Romans, you want to read chapter 10 and 11.

That's, I think, 19 pages. And also, there's a little more here. I want you to read Romans chapter 1 and 2. Romans chapter 1 and 2. And read it carefully.

Don't just zing through it. But just a good meditative read through those two chapters. Romans 1 and 2. Okay? Alright.

Let's get into our session. Shall we stand for a word of prayer? Lord, we love you this morning. Yes, you are the Holy, Holy, Holy One.

And you are our Father. Thank you, God. Thank you for saving our souls.

Thank you for making us whole. And delivering us in to the glorious liberty of a righteous life. Oh Lord, do have mercy upon us this morning.

And open the eyes of our understanding. Mine and these young men. As we look at righteousness.

Lord, you know all that is in your heart on this subject. Please, Father, help us. In Jesus' name.

Amen. Alright. The title of the second session here is God Demands Righteousness.

God Demands Righteousness. We finished yesterday with some thoughts on the righteousness of God. We're going to park there a bit again today.

I'm trying to help you to see that this is more than a judicial statement. It is righteousness imputed. No doubt.

The righteousness of God, which Paul is speaking about there in Romans chapter 1. And he will use this term again and again throughout the book of Romans. It is righteousness imputed. No doubt.

But it is also righteousness imparted. It is righteousness imputed. Right standing before God.

But it is also righteousness imparted. Right living that flows out of that right standing with God. So, the righteousness of God is how God saves a man's soul.

Delivering him and transforming him into a man that he, God, can have fellowship with. God's so great salvation is restorative. The passion of God is to restore.

To redeem man back to that life that he had in the beginning. To restore man back to that sweet, restful, captivating life. Dwelling in the love of God.

In the love of God, His Creator. We will go to the garden tomorrow. But for now, just that in a nutshell.

God's so great salvation is restorative. Please note this. The Father's primary focus is not heaven or hell.

These are powerful realities and motivations. But not primary ones. God wants man to spend eternity with Him in fellowship and love and service.

Oh, by the way, that is heaven. That is heaven. But, you know, in God's mind, He doesn't see this beautiful little place up here where you get to go someday, where everything is wonderful.

No! Heaven is heaven because God is there. And if there's no heaven in your life down here, there'll be no heaven someday. I guarantee it.

It won't happen. So, the primary focus is not heaven or hell. The joys of heaven and the torments of hell.

Okay. That's okay. I have no problem with that.

I have no problem preaching heaven and hell. That's fine. To awaken a sinner to his need.

But if that is all that motivates him, it doesn't come outright. And think about it. Imagine the way it is done today.

To preach a sermon about hell. And then ask, Do you want to escape hell? Come forward. Do you want to escape hell? Come forward.

Do you want to go to heaven? Come forward. Pray this prayer and you'll get to go to heaven. Pray this prayer and you won't have to go to hell.

Jesus, come into my heart. If that's all that is motivating a sinner, I agree with Charles Finney. You're on your way to hell.

If that's all that motivates you, he must see that his life is not right. And want it to change. He must see that he has offended a holy God.

And he needs to be made right in heart and life. And that's what repentance is, by the way. And we'll come to that too.

But he must see that he has offended a holy God. And his heart must be, I want to be saved from me. Not just, I want to go to heaven.

Our definition, which you'll be memorizing for tomorrow. Righteousness. It is right standing and right living.

It is conformity to the will of God in thought, in purpose, and in action. I took my concordance and looked up a few words. Very interesting to do that.

I looked up the word righteous. The word righteousness. The word just.

The word holy. And the word holiness. With my concordance.

Altogether these words appear one thousand times in the Bible. I think God is trying to say something to us. And surely God is trying to say something to America.

And American Christianity. One thousand times in His Word, the Holy Ghost breathed out the word righteous, righteousness, just, holy, and holiness. One thousand times.

All these words speak about heart and life. Everyone. They speak about heart and life.

In fact, when you go to study the words, it's hard to pull them apart. It's like you're studying this word. Is He talking about heart? Or is He talking about life? Is He talking about life? Or is He talking about heart? Is He talking about standing? Or is He talking about living? Which one is it? It's hard to pull them apart.

Please note this. As I studied these different words, I noticed that it is hard to divide them, or discern whether it is being used as a word representing our standing with God, or a word representing living right for God. And here's my conclusion.

In most cases, you cannot separate them. A truly upright heart will produce a righteous life, and therefore, they are wedded together in the Scriptures. I've noticed that with the word holy and holiness.

It's the same thing. They are so wedded together. And if you think about it, it does make sense.

If God, in fact, makes my heart right in standing before Him, it's going to produce a life that is fitting to the God who made me that way. And that's the burden of our message today. God demands righteousness.

Let's look at some of these words. Here are the definitions that I found in Strong's Concordance. The word righteous in the Old Testament.

And I just copied these down right out. To make right. To make right morally or in a judicial sense.

And that means standing. Morally or in a judicial sense. To cleanse.

To clear self. To be or do justify. Turn to righteousness.

These are the words that define the word righteous. Here's the New Testament. Equitable in character and action or in heart and in action.

Equitable or equal or right in heart and in action. That's the New Testament word for righteous. Look at righteousness.

No, I love this. This kind of flows out of older English, but you can get some insight into this one. Right actliness.

Right dash actly dash ness. Right actliness. Maybe that doesn't tickle you, but it tickles me.

Or, here's another one. Right wiseness. That's the old English for righteousness.

Right wiseness. And the word just. The word just means a lawful, righteous man.

A lawful, righteous man. All these words are right next to each other in the Strong's numbering system. That means they are close to the same thing.

I mean, you'll look at it and it's 6662 and 6663 and 6664. They're just right next to each other. Let's look at some verses now.

Turn in your Bible to 2 Samuel chapter 22. I want to prove my premise with the Scriptures this morning. That God demands righteousness.

And my righteous life or my unrighteous life affects how God looks at me, even though I'm in Christ. That's what I want to prove today. In 2 Samuel chapter 22 and verse 20 through 28.

Let me give you a little background before we read it. This is a song of David. You'll also find it in Psalm 18.

But I wanted to read it in the context here in 2 Samuel. It's David's song of deliverance after the death of Saul. Please note, David wasn't a perfect man, but he clearly walked with his God.

He walked with an upright heart and a righteous life through seven years of very difficult trials. This is the song, this is the overflow of thanksgiving after seven years of trial, being chased like a dog by Saul and all of his men. David was purified.

In fact, I believe it was part of his training as God prepared him to be the king over Israel. God trains His servants in different ways than we might think. And God trained David in the wilderness for seven years, wandering around, sleeping out under the stars, going to bed at night, not knowing whether he would be alive the next morning.

And he learned to trust God, and he learned to have the right attitudes in his heart, and he learned to have a humble attitude toward the king, even though the king was out to get him. And at the end of those seven years, God delivered David from the presence of Saul. And this song is the overflow of those seven years of trials and testings.

And by the way, David, as I say, was an Old Testament, New Testament saint. He was an Old Testament character who seemed to live very much in New Testament reality. Okay, let's read these words.

I better turn there myself. Quit preaching, brother. Find your Scriptures.

2 Samuel chapter 22. David says these words. He, God, brought me forth also into a large place.

He delivered me. Why? Because He delighted in me. The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness.

According to the cleanness of my hands hath He recompensed me. For I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from God. Now, you have to look at the context here.

The context of what he's saying is, I just went through seven years of hell, but I stayed faithful to God. That's what he's saying. I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God.

For all His judgments were before me. And as for His statutes, I did not depart from them. I was also upright before Him, and have kept myself from mine iniquity.

There's that right standing. I was upright before Him. Therefore, the Lord hath recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to my cleanness in His eyesight.

With the merciful, thou wilt show thyself merciful. With the upright man, thou wilt show thyself upright. Notice that David learns some things about the character of God as he walked through these trials.

With the pure, thou wilt show thyself pure. And with the froward, thou wilt show thyself unsavory. And the afflicted people, thou wilt save.

But thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayest bring them down. Here we have a revelation of the holy character of God. God relates to His people on the basis of who He is, and we must reckon with His character.

You know, when I was a younger man, and I read a portion of Scripture like this, I put a question mark in the margin of my Bible, and I said in my own heart, Lord, how does this fit with what I've been taught about justification by faith in Jesus Christ? Here's a man talking about things that he did. Talking about his faithfulness before the Lord. But I want to remind you, brethren, this morning, he didn't do this in his own strength.

That wasn't his righteousness. God was helping him. Now he's worshipping God and singing to God about God's deliverance and God's help and God's ability to give him the strength to live the way that he lived for those seven years.

Now we know, we read in the Scriptures, David failed some during those seven years. There were times when his heart was so discouraged he was in despair. But on the other end of the trial, he looks back, and he says, Lord, I was faithful.

I did honor You. I didn't give up my heart and my faith. Though he was tempted to do it, if you could imagine doing and living the way that he did for seven years.

What is my point? Righteousness does count, brethren. Right living does count. Right living counts between you and God every day.

You know, sometimes they say things like, we can't even please God. I don't believe that. I mean, Jesus pleased His Father.

He did everything that the Father wanted Him to do. And He said, He gave this testimony, I do always please my Father. We can please our Father if we live with an upright heart and let a righteous life flow out

of that standing.

We can please our Father. And the Father can look down on us and say, you're being faithful and I'm happy with what you're doing. That's okay.

Psalms 11 and verse 7, listen to these words. And we have a lot of Scriptures today, so I hope you love the Bible. Psalm 11 and verse 7. For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness.

Whoa, look at that verse. The righteous Lord loves righteousness. His countenance doth behold the upright.

Now, there's both the standing and the living in the same verse. Do you see that? Upright, that's the standing. Righteousness, that's the living.

And God's countenance shines on the upright heart. That's what that verse is saying. Psalm 15, verses 1 and 2. Lord, here's a question, a prayer.

Who shall abide in thy tabernacle and who shall dwell in thy holy hill? Answer. He that walketh uprightly and worketh righteousness and speaketh the truth in his heart. There it is again.

Upright heart. Righteous life. He's the one.

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, that's his life. And a pure heart, that's an upright heart. He shall obtain the blessing from the Lord.

Do you see how they go together? God demands righteousness. God loves a righteous life. That's what God is after in salvation.

Not heaven. Oh, I want to give you an escape route. No.

I want to change your life into a totally new life that ends in an eternity with me in heaven. That's what God is after. Psalm 23, verse 3. He restores my soul.

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Here's a couple of comparative, contrasting Proverbs. Proverbs 11, verse 5 and 6. The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way.

By the way, that perfect is upright heart. The righteousness of the perfect, or the upright heart, shall direct his way. But the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.

These contrasting Proverbs help us to see that this is clearly speaking about right living. Verse 6 in the same chapter. The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them.

But transgressors shall be taken in their own naughtiness. Let's look at a couple of New Testament examples. Hear the words of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness. They shall be filled. And may I say it this way? Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after a right standing and a right living.

They shall be filled. Jesus promised they would be filled. Matthew chapter 5 and verse 20.

For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. That's a pretty sobering verse, isn't it? I wonder what people do with that when they say, Oh, I'm covered in the righteousness of Christ. What I do and how I live doesn't affect my standing.

I wonder what they do with a verse like that. We will look more deeply into that righteousness which exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees a little later here this morning. But I'm just giving you the words.

Matthew 6.33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, His, God's. And all these things shall be added unto you, the Scripture says. Turn with me now to Romans.

In your little notebook now. I'm going to force you into your notebooks. Romans chapter 2. We want to read verse 3 through 11.

But a little introduction before we read. Paul is addressing the Jews in these verses. These Jews are righteous by laws and traditions, but missing the inward reality that produces true righteousness.

That's where the Jews were at. Paul loved his people, the Jews. He knew the difference between the righteousness which comes by laws and traditions and the true righteousness which produces a beautiful life.

He knew the difference. He's trying to shake them and wake them to reality. As I pondered the condition that they're in, I thought these words.

They are a bit eternally secure. These Jews that he's writing to. Now, their eternal security is based a little bit differently.

They think in their minds. We are the Jews. We are God's chosen people.

We have been given the law. We keep these laws and rules. We are secure.

Paul is trying to shake them and wake them out of their security. And help them to see that the way that they think they're going to make it is not the way to make it. Romans chapter 2 verse 3 through 11.

And thinkest thou this, O man, O thou Jewish man, that judgest them which do such things? And do such things. He's pointing back to chapter 1 in that catalogue of utter wickedness. That judgest them which do such things.

Do you think, O man, O Jewish man, if you do the same things that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? You see, at this point, they really think they're going to escape the judgment of God. Because they have this thing figured out in their mind. How you escape the judgment of God.

Keep these laws and these rules and these traditions. And you'll escape the judgment of God. There are other people, multitudes, with different ideas about how you escape the judgment of God.

Then he goes on to admonish them a bit. Reminding them of all the blessings that are upon them. And says, Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing or not remembering that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? God has in fact given you Jews.

Many, many blessings. But don't you know why God is giving you these blessings? That the goodness of God might lead you to repentance. That you might find the reality of a true and a living God.

But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. It sounds to me like God demands righteousness. What do you think? Who will render to every man according to his deeds.

Every. E-V-E-R-Y. Every man according to his deeds.

What he does. How he actually lives. To them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life.

And I wrote down here, Those who long for and follow after righteousness. But unto them that are contentious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness. Guess what God has for them? Indignation and wrath.

How can we say that God looks past everything we do, and just sees the righteousness of Christ, if in reality he is going to judge every one of us based on how we lived while we were here. Whether you are a Christian or whether you are a lost man, you will still be judged based on how you lived. Now praise God.

He has made a way for us to live a very different life. But that does not disannul the righteous judgment of Almighty God. It is still going to happen.

So unto them that are contentious and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness. Indignation, wrath, tribulation, anguish upon every soul of man that doeth, and that word doeth is doeth and doeth and doeth and practices evil. Of the Jew first.

First. Because they were blessed. And they were given much.

And also to the Gentile. But, oh for that longing heart that follows after righteousness. Glory, honor and peace to every man that worketh good.

To the Jew first. And also to the Gentile. For there is no respect of persons with God.

Amen. No respect of persons with God. Dear brethren, this is who God is.

That little glimpse that we just got there. We got a glimpse of God and who He is. We got a glimpse of His character.

We just got a glimpse of some of His attributes. This is who God is. And He is not going to overlook man's evil and just say, the righteousness of my son will cover that.

He is not going to do that. Hello? He is not going to overlook evil and just pass over and say, oh the righteousness of my son will cover that. He is not going to do that.

In truth, the righteousness of His son will deliver you from all of that. But God is not going to just look at the way you are living in your foolish ways and say, oh my son's righteousness will cover that. That's heresy.

And evil communications corrupt good manners. And look around you to see the proof of it. You've got millions of people thinking those kind of thoughts.

And it is producing one mixed up life called the Christian life. Just like the Jews had twisted things into a false security, we modern Americans can do the same thing. We can say, I'm righteous because of Christ, but if we are not willing for our heart to be changed, which produces right living, we have deceived ourselves just as much as those Jews.

2 Corinthians 5 9-11, again looking at this point that God demands righteousness and He is going to deal with us after the matter and manner in which we, each one, lives. And I want you to note, this is the Apostle Paul that is writing these words. And he puts himself right in the middle of those words.

He says, Wherefore, we labor. Oh, that sounds like works. Works righteousness.

Oh, Paul. Wherefore, we labor, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him. Oh, that sounds very different than, I'm accepted in Christ.

I'm accepted in Christ. Oh, glory, I'm accepted in Christ. Wherefore, we labor, that we might be accepted of Him.

You know, they say, oh, I've accepted Jesus as my Savior. Has the Savior accepted you? There's a big difference, by the way. Look what he goes on to say.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. Paul. We, Paul.

We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body. And I will note in there, may receive just payment for the things done in his body. According to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Oh, and then listen to his next word. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. Do you see what he's saying there? You know, I'm not trying to scare you this morning, but it's okay for a little holy fear to settle down upon the heart when you read verses like that.

And you realize, okay, God has made a way for me to live a righteous life through Christ. And He's going to make me accountable for the life that I've lived. And I can't just say, oh, it's all under the blood and it's all in the righteousness of Christ.

You can't just go flippantly through life hanging my unrighteousness on the righteousness of Christ and think, oh, everything's going to be okay when I get to glory. You may not get to glory living like that. Alright.

Enough negative. Let's look at the positive side of all this a bit, huh? Because God said He is going to make us righteous. That's an Old Testament promise.

He's going to make us righteous. The prophet, is it Zachariah? John the Baptist's father? Zachariah? Said these words, that God promised that we might serve Him without fear in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life. That's a promise.

And that comes through the Messiah. That we can live our lives in fear and walk before God in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. What a beautiful promise.

Let's turn now to the book of Ezekiel in the Old Testament. Ezekiel chapter 36. In Ezekiel chapter 36, and we're going to read from verse 22 to 28.

This is a key portion of Scripture. We will come back here and park on it for a good while. But it's one that you want to remember.

It's one that I use often when I win souls. It's very encouraging to a heart that is longing to be changed. I mean, it's like, good news! Ezekiel 36.

But in these verses, we see God's longing heart for righteousness. Real righteousness. You see, salvation with God's name on it must be a righteous transformation or it does not rightly represent God.

Salvation with God's name on it must be a righteous transformation or it does not rightly represent God. The prophet Ezekiel, here in these verses, of course, he's speaking to Israel and he's speaking words of prophetic promise, words of a better day for them. And better days did come for Israel.

They left their captivity. They were allowed to come back to Jerusalem. The nation was established again.

Many beautiful things happened. These were words of encouragement, telling them of good things to come. But as so many of the prophets did, their prophecies not only addressed the people in that very day and the situation that they were in, but they also were prophetic looking down the road to the days when Jesus would come.

This is one of those which is a beautiful prophetic promise of the salvation that God will wrought in the heart of man through Jesus Christ our Lord. That's what we're looking at. Reading from verse 22, Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God, I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake.

Look at that. By the way, God didn't just save you for your own sake either. He saved you for His holy name's sake.

You were bought with a price and you are a possession of God. For mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen whether you went by the way you lived. I'm adding that.

But look what he says he's going to do. I will sanctify my great name which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them, and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God. And how and when will they know that? When I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.

Oh, that is a precious verse right there. I'm going to sanctify my great name in your life and they will be able to see it. And because they are able to see it, my great name will be sanctified.

It will be lifted back up there to the place where it's supposed to be. You see, brethren, God's name represents His character. And therefore, it's very important that we rightly represent Him.

For I will take you, verse 24, I will take you from among the heathen and gather you out of all countries and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean. It makes me think of the words that Jesus said to the leper who said, Thou canst make me whole if you will.

And Jesus looked at the leper and said, I will be thou clean. Oh, glory! What a happy day that was for Him. And ye shall be clean.

Oh, from what? From all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. Oh, that's good news to a hungry heart, isn't it? That's good news to one who's following after righteousness, who patiently is longing and wanting right. Oh, that's good news.

Oh, but that's just the beginning. A new heart also will I give you. Oh, that's good news.

I've read that to a few sinners and it stopped them in their tracks. And they stopped and said, does that verse mean what I think it said? You mean God will give me a new heart? Yeah, yeah. Man, what do I need to do? Listen, that expresses the attitude that every soul should come to God with.

I want to be changed. You mean I can get a new heart? Yeah. What do I need to do? A new heart will I give you and a new spirit will I put within you and I will take away... Oh, glory! I will take away the stony heart out of you.

I'm going to perform an operation. It's divine supernatural surgery. I'm going to take the stony heart out of you.

Amen, Mo? He did it! He did it. I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and I will give you a heart of flesh and that's not all. If that's not enough, it's not all.

And I will put my spirit within you. I'm going to give you a new heart and then I'm going to put my spirit. I'm God.

I'm going to put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and ye shall keep my judgments and do them and ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers and ye shall be my people and I will be your God. I mean, that salvation so beautifully laid out in the Old Testament. I wonder what the Apostle Paul thought when he grabbed ahold of those verses in the Arabian desert after it happened to his own heart.

He must have leaped for joy reading those words. Realizing, that's exactly what happened to me. The point here today is, without digging too deep there yet, there's a lot of gold in there and we'll come back to it.

The point here today is, God demands righteousness and true salvation will produce a righteous life. Not just a right standing, but a righteous life which comes from a right standing. I believe in the standing.

Oh, I love to sing the song, Justified fully through Calvary's love. Oh, what a standing is mine! I believe that with all my heart. But that powerful standing produces a life.

Turn to Isaiah 51. I'm going to have to run now. Here's my nugget.

This is the nugget that I didn't have yesterday that I got this morning. As I cried out to the Lord and I said, God, I know that this burden is on Your heart that Your people will be righteous. Please, open my eyes.

Are you there? Isaiah 51. A little introduction. I love to find the verses in the Old Testament that Paul found when he was in Arabia on the backside of the desert.

I love to find them. And I found some. Right here in these words.

I found some of the verses that Paul found on the backside of the desert. Paul knew Isaiah probably better than any book in the Old Testament. The scholars call Isaiah the Gospel of Isaiah.

You know, it's the Gospel of Mark, the Gospel of Matthew, the Gospel of Mark, the Gospel of Luke, the Gospel of John, and the Gospel of Isaiah. Because the Gospel is in Isaiah. Very interesting in my studies.

Righteousness appears 63 times in the book of Isaiah. More than any other book in the Old Testament except Psalms. But Psalms is not like a doctrine book.

63 times. More than in any other book in the Old Testament. Righteousness appears 36 times in the book of Romans.

More than in any other book in the New Testament. Big flashing signs saying there's gold here. There's gold here.

There's gold here. And there is gold there. I believe that these words that we're going to read now is the revelation that Paul got in Arabia.

Because he was the apostle that God used to lay this whole thing out. In the book of Romans. Righteousness appears 5 times in these verses that we're going to look at.

Chapter 51, verse 1 through 8. And I want you to imagine and meditate with me just for a moment. Before we read them, I'm preparing you to read them so that you don't miss what's in there. Imagine Paul.

He's in Arabia. He's on the back side of the desert. He was the Pharisee of the Pharisees.

He knew all about righteousness which came by laws and traditions. But all the while, there was an emptiness inside of him. There was this gnawing feeling that just kept telling him there's more.

There's more. He meets the Lord on the way to Damascus. He's born again.

Born of God. He's born of the Spirit and filled with the Holy Ghost. And all of a sudden, he knows an acceptance with God and a righteousness which is within him that he's never known before.

And his heart begins to ponder. And he says it in Galatians. When all of this happened to me, I conferred not with flesh and blood, but I went into Arabia.

And I believe he spent two or three years there in the Scriptures which, by the way, was the Old Testament. He didn't have what we have. He just had the Old Testament.

So, this man was mining gold out of the Old Testament. He comes upon this chapter in Isaiah 51. And it so unites with his heart and his experience.

Heart in the past, in that he's longing to be and do right. Heart in the present, because he now has a righteousness that clearly comes from God. And the mystery? It all came through Jesus Christ the Messiah, the Anointed One.

Let's read now in these verses. Isaiah 51 and verse 1. Hearken to Me, God says. Hearken to Me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord.

I want more. This is the Old Testament. We're not in the New.

Christ hasn't come. The Spirit of God has not come in and regenerated. But yet still, in the Old, there were those sincere ones who, with patience in right doing, longing to be right with God, lived an upright life through those sacrifices.

Hearken to Me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord. Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham, Paul.

Look unto Abraham, Paul. Abraham, your father, and unto Sarah that bare you. For I called him alone and I blessed him, and I increased him.

Now, you have to understand the significance of that. How did God bless Abraham? Why did God bless Abraham? And Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. That's how God blessed Abraham.

And that standing before God produced a beautiful life in Abraham. So beautiful! So right! So wanting to please God that God could test Abraham to the point of saying, take thy son Isaac, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and take him up to Mount Moriah and sacrifice him there as a burnt offering unto Me. And when Abraham was finished with that whole ordeal, God said to Abraham, now I know that you love Me.

Right standing and a beautiful life. Look unto Abraham, Paul, your father, and unto Sarah that bare you. Verse 3, For the Lord shall comfort Zion.

He will comfort all her waste places. And He will make her wilderness like Eden. This is a prophecy of salvation coming.

He will make her wilderness like Eden and her desert like the Garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody. Hearken unto Me, My people, and give ear unto Me.

You know what they're rejoicing about there in verse 3? This beautiful righteousness that's going to come. Hearken unto Me, God says. O My nation, for a law shall proceed from Me, and I will make My judgment to rest for the light of the people.

And I wrote down here in the margin of my Bible, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. A law will proceed from Me, God says, promising things to come. Verse 5, My righteousness, My righteousness is near.

My salvation is gone forth. And My arms shall judge the people. The isles shall wait upon Me, and on My arms shall they trust.

That's the Gentiles. 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. They that dwell therein shall die in light manner, but My salvation shall be forever and My righteousness shall not be abolished.

Hearken unto Me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is My law. Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings, for the moss shall eat them up like a garment and the worm shall eat them like wool. But My righteousness shall be forever and My salvation from generation to generation.

Awake! Awake! Put on strength, O arm of the Lord! Awake, as in ancient days in the generations of old! In other words, bring it on, Lord! Bring it on! Art Thou not it that hath cut Rahab and wounded the dragon? Art Thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep, that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over? He's referring back to their deliverance out of Egypt. But He's not talking about a deliverance out of Egypt here. He's talking about the deliverance that we're talking about, which is My salvation, My righteousness.

Yes, in this Gospel therein is the righteousness of God revealed, or the way that God has chosen to make man righteous in standing and in living. And then look at verse 11 to finish it off so beautifully. Therefore, the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Zion and everlasting joy shall be upon their head.

They shall obtain gladness and joy and sorrow and mourning shall flee away. We're talking about redemption, brothers. We're talking about a righteousness which comes from God, which changes our standing and changes our living.

We are talking about both of them. And I believe that Paul divinely stumbled on these verses because you will see all the way through Romans My righteousness. My righteousness.

The righteousness of God. The righteousness of God. You'll see it.

We'll be there. Tomorrow, we want to look a bit at the doctrine of man in the Bible. Let's pray.

Father, we pray that You'll open the eyes of our heart just like You opened the eyes of the Apostle Paul as he was searching the Scriptures out there in the wilderness and found his heart in these verses, which is all the verses he had. He had no New Testament, God. I pray, open our eyes, Lord, to such a degree that it changes us completely.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/18/SID18675.mp3>

Source:

<https://sermonindex.net/speakers/denny-kenaston/christthe-way-god-makes-man-righteous-2-god-demands-righteousness/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net