

# The Righteousness of Faith - Part 1

by Roy Hession

---

*Roy Hession's sermon emphasizes the transformative power of faith and the importance of rediscovering the true essence of the gospel as articulated in Romans.*

**Duration:** 47:27

**Topics:** "Righteousness Of Faith"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of the gospel as good news for bad people. He explains that the gospel is an instrument of power that reveals the righteousness of God. The preacher encourages believers to continually appreciate and rely on the simple message of the gospel, as it is the foundation of their faith. He also suggests that the lack of power in the church may be due to a lack of emphasis on the message of the gospel.

---

## Transcript

These mornings together we're going to study the first five chapters of this great writing of the New Testament, the epistle of Paul to the Romans. And this morning we're going to read what we can regard as his introduction to the great theme he has to speak to us about. Romans chapter one.

It's a personal letter. He doesn't write anonymously. He wants to know who it is that's writing to them and what right he has to write to them.

And therefore, as so often in his epistles, he doesn't scruple to claim to be one of God's sent ones with a special commission for the blessing and salvation of men. Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, which he had aforetime promised by his prophets in the holy scriptures, concerning his son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of according to the flesh and declared to be the son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead, by whom we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for his name, among whom are he also the called of Jesus Christ. To all that be in Rome, the loved of God, called to be saints.

The called apostle is writing to the called saints. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world, for God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers.

Paul had a very deep prayer life. I don't know if he had a prayer list, but he invariably tells those to whom he writes how continually he is praying for them, deeply, in a pervading way. And I've often found that a great challenge, the extent to which I am following in those sort of steps, especially those that once have a touch of his help.

Oh, how concerned Paul was with him, and he invariably begins his letters by assuring those to whom he writes of the way in which he's been praying for them. For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers, making request if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you. For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established.

That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and of me. Now I would not have you ignorant brethren that oftentimes I purpose to come unto you, but was led hitherto, old English for I was prevented, hindered hitherto, that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles. I am debtor both to the Greek and to the barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise.

So as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also, for I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. For it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith.

As it is written, the just shall live by faith. Well now I've been considerably exercised about the matter of the Bible readings for this week, feeling very much my own inadequacy, and if one's preparation for them has done anything, it has been to bring me to a place of greater despair as to one's own ability to adequately open up this wonderful scripture. But I feel that that's the place where we need to be.

We want the Lord Jesus himself to unveil the meaning of his own word, and sometimes we can hinder him by trying to be too clever. I believe the epistle to the Romans is, if we may say so, one of the most important scriptures of the New Testament, even of the Bible, though it's dangerous perhaps to think of one part of the inspired word of God as being more important than another. But in a minor sense, I think we can say that.

It has been the rediscovery of the truths enshrined in the epistle to the Romans, which has been the first course of the great spiritual awakenings and revivals which have blessed our world. It was the rediscovery by many people who'd lived in struggling and darkness for years of these truths that produced the Reformation. Don't you get the idea that the Reformation was a political thing or bound up with Henry VIII's divorces? It was a revival.

No one was a greater opponent to the Reformation than Henry VIII, when it suited him. Oh no, quite independent of those political movements, there was a great spiritual revival, rediscovery of God and of the grace of God and of Jesus Christ. And it was largely as a result of finding the meaning of the epistle to the Romans, Luther, and the many, many in England and on the continent, the common town that was able at last to understand the simple way of faith which had been obscured by the teachings of Rome for so many centuries.

And the great awakening through Whitefield and Wesley was founded once again through a rediscovery of these things. And I feel that we've got to tread with a great awe as we go through these scriptures. This was the path that Bunyan went with tears and sighs and ultimate joy.

These were the scriptures, the history behind every verse of this great writing of Paul. And who knows, but God wants us, even today, even amongst us evangelical Christians, to rediscover the grace of God as revealed in this great writing. I believe that's what God is wanting to do for us, even amongst evangelicals, is to rediscover the gospel.

I don't think that we can assume that just because a man is saved and he belongs, he comes from our background, that the gospel is just, you can assume it, he knows it. I feel for myself I'm just beginning to rediscover again the wealth of this gospel. You see, it's too good to be true.

The moment you depend on your own human reasoning, you're going to miss it. We'll only understand this great gospel that God has given us as it's revealed to us by the Holy Spirit. You wouldn't guess it.

You couldn't work it out. It's astonished the angels. And once things become systematized, as perhaps they have in our evangelical world, the danger is we've missed the real precious gospel, and we go back to something less than that.

Well, I know, all I know is that the Bible says I'm to grow in grace. Growing in grace, not growing in goodness, growing in grace. Growing in our apprehension of this astonishing, surprising grace, this good news for bad people.

I tell you it takes some believing, and we shall perhaps find ourselves difficult to believe it is so good. Good news, such good news for such bad and feeble and helpless people as ourselves. And please don't think that the bad people only refers to the unsaved.

The bad people for whom God has got good news are so often the saints, the Christians. Yes, good news. I need it all the time.

Good news for bad people. Any other gospel, any other message just disqualifies me right away. And I tell you this left to my own thinking, left to the logic of my guilty conscience.

I shall never see it. My guilty conscience has always made me feel that it's something other that's expected of me. Something other that's going to do for me.

Only the Holy Spirit, the one who's called the Comforter, can rightly give us to understand the full content of this gospel of grace. Now its position in our New Testament I think is interesting. It comes as you see after the Acts of the Apostles.

And the Acts of the Apostles, the last chapters, show us Paul harried by the bitter prejudiced Jews. And he finds himself ultimately a prisoner in Rome, testifying to the people at Rome. And that's where Acts ends.

Paul at Rome, a prisoner. And then the very next book is the letter which he wrote to Rome long before he ever got there. He said he'd been praying that God would give him a prosperous journey in the will of God to Rome.

Well he didn't think he was going to go as a prisoner. Anyhow he didn't have to pay his traveling expenses. Rome took care of that.

He got there. He got there in God's way very different from the way in which he thought he might get there. And here we have the letter which he wrote to them long before.

He longed to see this group of Christians in Rome. He wrote this letter ahead and at last he's come. I think I said last year that there are two great writings of the Apostle Paul.

The Hebrews, the letter to the Hebrews, and the letter to the Romans. I like to feel, I have it in my field, I'm sure it's fact, that when Paul got to Rome, harried as I've said by the bitterness of the Jews, he looked back to his own people and the connotation at the end of the epistle to the Hebrews says he wrote to them from Rome, lovingly to preach Christ to them, to show that Christ was the end of all their rituals. And here is this other great writing of his.

The Hebrews was written to the Hebrew Christians and the epistle to the Romans to the Gentile Christians. Now, what is unique about, I think, about the epistle to the Romans is this. It differs from all his other epistles in that he had been to all the other places.

Galatia, Corinth. He knew them. They were his converts.

He was concerned for their going on. In case after case, news had come to him of certain needs which had matured. Things that had gone wrong.

Matters in which they needed help at Ephesians, at Ephesus, at Colossae, at Corinth. And the main first purpose of his writing was to correct, to balance them on something. His positive statements of the gospel come in sort of incidental to his correction.

They're wonderful incidentals. Terrific. But that was the main purpose.

But in the case of his letter to the Romans, he'd never been to Rome. He'd heard that Christians who had traveled to that part had borne witness, and people had believed on the Lord Jesus, and there was a little assembly of Christians at the very heart of the civilized world, Rome. The most strategic center in the world of that day.

And he'd never been there. And he longed to see them. You see, the Apostle Paul, without being proud, knew that he'd got a special commission.

He knew he was the Apostle of the Gospel for the Gentiles, as it was recognized that Peter was the Apostle of the Gospel to the Jews. Or there were others preaching to the Gentiles too. But Paul knew that he had that special commission, and everybody knew it too.

And here has sprung up in the most important city of the world, a group of Christians, and he's had no hand in it at all. Well, he's not jealous, he praises for them, but after all he feels, well, it's my parish. And I must go and see them.

And that's why he writes this letter. He says, I haven't been able to come, I've been wanting to, I've been praying, I've been hindered, but I long to be able to come to you, that we can link up. And we can be mutually helped, you by my faith, and me by yours.

He takes a very low station, he doesn't profess that he's going to tell them everything, and they're just going to listen. He wants to link up. Maybe when he gets there, he'll have to speak a very real word of authority, perhaps a very real word of correction.

But he doesn't know that. And thus it is, because at the moment, there's nothing for him to correct. Nothing on which he needs to banish them, because he doesn't know how they are.

When he writes to them, he writes to them a straightforward, orderly exposé of the gospel of the grace of God, beginning at the beginning, and ending at the end. And thus it is, the epistle of the Romans differs perhaps from any other epistle, except that for Hebrews, where it isn't occasioned by some need for correction, but it is a straightforward exposé of the gospel, in the same way that Hebrews is too. But in the epistle of the Hebrews, it's especially with regard to the Jews who needed help to see their ritual, which they were pointing forward to, and fulfilled in the law of Jesus Christ.

So I don't know if that's interesting. It is to me. And it makes me feel, well, here is something that I must give special attention to.

I would say to any young Christian, live for long in the epistle to the Romans. When I was saved, I just went through it again and again. I neglected every other part of the scripture just for this.

And I'm so glad I did. I don't know, now I look at it, I don't know how much I know of it. But I've gone over it so often.

And so I feel I begin again at the beginning with you in this lovely writing. Now, this is just our preliminary introduction to this, because I've got to make you mouthwater. That's always the purpose of the first Bible reading, no good plunging in.

You've got to say, my, I didn't realise we were going to get in on something so thrilling as this. You see? So we won't get very far this morning. And actually, of course, most people, if they take Romans, they like to take Romans 1 to 8. Well, that was one of the reasons why I was in such despair, because I didn't see how we could get to chapter 8. And I think we'll, there's a very natural division at the end of chapter 5. I think that'll be enough for us.

If the Holy Spirit reveals this message to us, we'll be ready for glory, I think, as we come to the end of chapter 5. Now, the subject of this writing of Paul is the gospel. The gospel. Oh, I believe we've lost, it's been emptied of its content.

That's the very word, the gospel. It's synonymous with religion. It's synonymous with church.

It's even synonymous with Bible teaching. Oh, no, the gospel is something utterly different. You can be a Bible teacher, but not a gospel preacher.

I don't think that we are called to be anything else but preachers of the gospel. Paul wasn't. He said, I'm no Bible teacher.

I'm separated, he says in the first verse, unto the gospel. I was ordained for this. Before I was born, from my mother's womb, he said, I was separated unto the gospel, which the scriptures revealed.

Oh, you can teach the Bible, but not, let that miss, the gospel. And the gospel is this precious good news, for bad people, on condition they admit how bad they are. You cannot tell how good the news is.

It's path with knowledge, that dear love of thine. Good news for bad people, on condition they acknowledge how bad they really are. As I said the other day, if there's a battle, it's only on that last issue, not the battle to be good, not the battle to be better, but the battle to be willing to admit how bad you are.

Granted there's that continually in our hearts. Grace is flowing like a river. Millions there have been supplied.

Still it flows as fresh as ever from the Savior's wounded side. That's the battle, friend. If God will help me, and help you in these days, to be honest, and go to the bother of us to our badness as we see it.

Victory will follow as certainly as the dawn follows the night. That's God's concern. That's the work of grace.

Good news for bad people, on that condition. And as I say, this is the great theme that the apostle is dealing with. In these introductory verses, four times he uses this word gospel.

Verse one, separated unto the gospel of God. I've got nothing to do but to preach good news for bad people. Sometimes you feel you're right to give people a bit of your mind and tell them how bad they are and what's going to happen to them.

But Paul said, no that's not my job. I'm separated to tell sins of good news. Verse five, you have the same word again.

Is it verse five, verse nine? Anyway, God is my witness whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his son. Verse 15, I'm ready to preach the gospel. Verse 16, I'm not ashamed of the gospel.

When one goes to America, they're very fond of rather pigeonholing every speaker. They put him down, he's an evangelist, he's a Bible teacher, he's a deeper life teacher. And they used to try and suggest that I was a deeper life teacher.

And I said, no I'm not, I'm a gospel preacher. Good news, even for the saints, they need it. Poor, weary, defeated children of God like we are, so struggling to attain standards that are just we can't get to, and only getting so condemned by our efforts and our failures.

Good news. Well, this is what Paul has. And I do trust we shall see that this good news applies very much to us believers, all the way along, all the way from earth to glory, good news.

Yes, and when that world's glory is dawning on my soul, tell me the old, old story, Christ Jesus makes thee whole. Remember, as the hymn says, I'm the sinner, whom Jesus came to save. And whatever experiences of grace and of his goodness you have, you'll never get beyond your need of this old, old story.

And growing in grace, growing in maturity, is growing in an appreciation of this deep, simple message. That's rather encouraging, you see, you who've been saved, you aren't expected to go on to something way beyond, you're expected to stay where you began, but go deeper. Finding deeper needs, but grace to meet those deeper needs.

Now, the main verses of this introductory section are verses 14 to 17. And this is where Paul really tells them what he's going to tell them. Maybe you've heard the story, I've often mentioned it, of the young local preacher who was just beginning to preach, and he went to an old, experienced preacher, old, rustic, local preacher for some advice.

And this man told him, he said, this is what I do. First of all, I tells them what I'm going to tell them. Then he says, I tell them.

Then I tells them what I've told them. Well, in these verses, Paul tells us what he's going to tell us. And the whole of the Epistle to the Romans is summed up, I think, in verses 14, 15, 16, and 17.

First of all, he says, I am debtor. I'm debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise. Paul says, I want to come to you.

I want to have fruit among you as among other Gentiles, because I'm in your debt. I'm in your debt as I'm in debt to all men, to Greeks, to barbarians, to educated, to uneducated, to university students, to manual workers. And we're going to just look at that first verse, that first word, I am debtor, then go on to the next.

What is that verse where Paul says that he was put in trust with the Gospel? I didn't get to turning it up in Timothy. As we have been put in trust of the Gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men but God. You can find that for me afterwards.

It's in one of the Epistles to Timothy. We have been put in trust with the Gospel. In other words, Paul says, I'm like a trustee of a will.

You know when a person leaves a will, they appoint a trustee, whose business it is to administer the will, to see to it that the beneficiaries under that will get what is due to them under that will. And thus it is that that trustee is a debtor to the beneficiaries of the trust. He's responsible by law to fulfill his obligation to those to whom money has been left.

They may be paupers, they may be of no consequence, but the will has put that trustee in debt to those men. Now that's a sense in which Paul felt. He said, I'm put in trust with the Gospel.

I'm a trustee. And if you've tasted even a little of this grace, you know Jesus, you and I are trustees. We are debtors.

We owe it to them. We don't owe it to God so much, we owe it to them. The sheep for whom the shepherd died.

And I found this challenging when we were reading it in the Scripture the other day. Rebel said something to me that sort of challenged me. You see, we are debtors to the Greeks and to the barbarians.

It's so easy to say, well of course my calling is just to a certain type. Don't ask me to speak to that type. Very often you might feel I like my business speaking to a humble sort.

I don't feel I've got a word perhaps for the university student who may come across my path. Nothing of the sort. We are debtors to the Greeks and to the barbarians, to the wise and to the unwise.

Nor are we to think that our business is only to speak to the people rather more intelligent types, the better educated types. We are debtors to the unwise, to the uneducated as well as the educated. We owe them something.

They may be, we may think themselves much superior to us or inferior, I don't know. But we owe Jesus. We owe this message.

And we are not to allow ourselves to have partiality. Not to allow ourselves to have inferiority to a certain type that I know. I have a natural, oh no don't ask me, that's not my line.

But that's got to absolutely go. We are debtors to all sorts. Paul said I'm a debtor.

Even to you folks at Rome. I've got good news. I've got, I'm a trustee under the last will and testament of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I am debtor. So in verse 15 it says I am ready. Because I'm a debtor I'm ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

And it seems to me as if it needed some courage to do that. Here was Rome the mistress of the world. The centre of political power.

And here was Paul just a trapped preacher. With a message which had already proved foolishness to the Greeks and a stumbling block to the Jews. And he might well have felt a bit ashamed, a bit inferior with this message.

What would they think? He might well have said well no, no, no, not Rome. That's too much, that's too important. But he says no, I owe it to Rome and I'm ready to go in even to that place of the world's power with a message that at first they'll think nothing of.

They may think it foolishness, they may think it may be a stumbling block to them. But I am, I am ready. Oh, it's a wonderful thing to be willing to go where he sends you without trimming yourself.

To be willing to be thoughtful, to penetrate into the most posh circle if necessary. The most educated circle with a message of hell and heaven, of Jesus, of sin, of the precious blood. That seems utterly irreverent but you better give it to whoever it is.

Because Paul says, I'm not ashamed, I'm debtor, I'm ready. And all that because I'm not ashamed. It may look foolishness, it may seem to be a stumbling block.

It is to the Jew, to the Jew type of today. To the man of religion, getting his peace and blessing through sacraments rather than Calvary. Please turn the cassette over now, do not fast wind it in either direction.

To be told that it counts for nothing for only faith in the blood of Christ, what a stumbling block. You may just say that all my goodness goes for nothing, yes we do. My religion is for nothing.

It does nothing to put the soul right with God. Only Jesus can do helplessness. But oh, it's a, it's a stumbling block to them.

But Paul says he's not ashamed of it. That's the sense he went into, it means he's not ashamed. It wasn't that, you know, sense of shame, you know, a bit frightened.

When he says he's not ashamed, it's like a man who's, a workman who's got a tool or something he's made. I'm not ashamed of it, it does its job, it does its job. I'm not ashamed of it.

Although it will look like that, it is the power of God. Yes, he says he's not ashamed because it's an instrument of power, working to the salvation of the one who believes, in a way that a mere ethic never can be. I'm not ashamed.

This good news for bad people on condition they admit their badness is God's divinely appointed instrument for the performing of moral miracles in life. We've seen it happen again and again right across Europe. Oh, it's a wonderful thing to have a heightened confidence in this simple message.

It doesn't need trimming, it doesn't need polishing, it doesn't need to be rendered more acceptable. In all its simplicity and ruggedness, it is an instrument of power. And this is the thing that Paul's going to expose to us, and expound, this simple message which is that which God is pledged to authenticate.

Now, very often we are concerned for revival, for the spirit, mighty things to happen. And we think that what's lacking is the power. Now, I'm going to make this suggestion, my own personal feeling, I speak for myself, is what's lacking is the message.

All the prayer in the world won't get the Holy Ghost to authenticate a message which isn't his. It's the message. There's a message which the Holy Spirit loves to set itself to.

And if we're not seeing the Holy Spirit setting itself to it, is it that we haven't got the message? Is it that we're not preaching pure, true gospel? Well, all I know is that when one does, when God gives us freedom to emphasize the good news for bad people, everybody's so thrilled, everybody's almost surprised. Oh, how easy it is to preach and to give to people something other. We want to discover this, because this is the message which is the instrument of power in God's hand.

I don't know, I don't know those who've seen a special-up spoiler spirit with those that prayed more than others. It was the message. I was reading, as perhaps you have, with Mitfield's journal, you can get them in the bookroom, lovely book.

And the great word, he says, he doesn't mention revival at all, incidentally. It's invariably said that in the midst of revival no one talks about revival, they talk about Jesus. Revival? No, it's Jesus! And that book is full of Jesus, though it was full of revival, you only got to sort of try and sort of think what he was saying, what was happening to him.

My, that was terrific. But the word he uses, the people were melted. Am I, I ask myself, am I giving a sort of message that is calculated to melt people, even on an earthly level? I don't know that we are.

No, they were greatly affected. Oh, I see this love that part with knowledge. Brings of beauty, sin or sinner, such as I, nigh unto God.

Oh, it has come to reality. I believe the whole history has to be told, that's it. That's the hidden mystery, that's what I'm going to authenticate it with, life of heart after heart.

And now we come to the reason, first of all he gives us the reason why he's not ashamed of it, because it's an instrument of power in a way that a mere ethic never is. Then he goes on to say why the gospel is an instrument of power, and perhaps this is the leading theme, the theme that is going to throw a flood of light right on through the epistle. For, now here's the thing, I take a long time getting there, but here it is in our last part of our talk together.

For, therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith. Now that, whether you understand it or not, is the message of the epistle to the Romans. When you say that's the one verse, I didn't understand.

So this is the reason why it's the power of God to salvation, because in it the righteousness of God is revealed. And we must spend our last 10 minutes right on this great theme of the righteousness of God. It is the great theme of the Apostle Paul.

It's the theme in his epistles. And you know, instead of trying to make the Bible so much into modern language that you can understand it, I think we've got to take it as it is and tell the people what it means as it is. Some of these modern translations, especially this particular great theme, only serve to show that the man who did the translating didn't understand what it meant.

What we need to do is say, well, what does it mean? You know, if you have any book on a certain subject, you've got to understand its terms. My wife is very keen on gardening, and there are gardening books around the place, and I pick them up, and I find I need a glossary of terms to understand what it's about. Some of the names are all in Latin.

Well, you do. Any book, any textbook, and so it is with the gospel. There are terms used, and you need to understand what they mean.

But you see, it ought to be understood by anybody. Actually, God has hidden his truth as well as revealed it. I thank thee, O Father, I have hid these things from the wise and prudent.

God has so put his truth that anointed or unanointed eyes just went to sleep. Merely curious people. Well, get a thing out of it.

But hungry hearts anointed by the Holy Spirit will understand. So don't be surprised if the things that seem hidden, they may be purposely hidden, lest God should cast his pearls before swine. But hungry hearts won't find them.

Hearts are willing to be taught, and so it is with this great theme, the righteousness of God. Now, it helps the revised version, which for accuracy can't be excelled, has it this way. Now listen.

For therein is revealed a righteousness of God. Therein is revealed a righteousness of God. As you read that verse, and as you go through the epistle to the Romans, it's quite obvious that when Paul talks about the righteousness of God, he's not talking about any personal quality of God.

Literally, in the Greek, it's a righteousness. And the word of is not genitive. It isn't there is revealed God's righteousness.

No, it's a righteousness of, in the sense of, out of. My knowledge of Greek is gained solely through Young's analytical concordance and such like. But those ministers here will know, I think I'm right, it's the word of, out of.

We Christians, we know that phrase, being born of God. We know that the word of there isn't genitive, it's being born out of God. It's the same word there.

A righteousness from God, provided by God as opposed to one of man. For therein is revealed a righteousness from God. Well, that carries us only so far, but still we may not understand it.

I think the Scripture Union, you know, goes through the Bible in about five years. And it was five years ago the Scripture Union took us through Romans. And at that time, Canon Guy King was writing the notes on Romans, and he said something there which has been so helpful to me.

He says, whenever you come across this word righteousness in Paul's writings, read, rightness with God. For therein is revealed a divine rightness with himself. For the man who confesses his acts.

The word righteousness is a right standing with God, available to the fiendish and the most guilty sinner. The vilest offender who truly believes that moment from Jesus a pardon receives. But it's more than pardon.

It has been counted right with God. And God has revealed a way by which the most hopeless failure, the most failing sinner--we need to be honest about those things--is counted as right with God as it's possible to be. Not even the angel Gabriel has a better standing with God than has the sinner who's fled to Jesus for refuge.

The man who comes to Jesus and he's all wrong, God says, now you're all right. And what is revealed here is God's way of declaring sinners utterly right with himself. A perfect rightness with God is revealed for that most failing offender.

Now, I don't want to be over-critical of the new versions. Thank God for them. They've made people read and, of course, no version is really perfect, not even our author.

But it's interesting to see how this has been missed. Even our dear good friend Phillips, he says, talks about God's way of imparting righteousness. No, not righteousness imparted.

I don't know whether my peace with God is dependent on the extent to which righteousness is being imparted. I don't know where I am. No, it's not righteousness imparted.

It's righteousness imputed. You are reckoned right with God even while you're a sinner of one condition. You can say that you are one and extended it.

And if you don't get peace, you've got to go a bit deeper than that. Not peace, maybe you've only just been superficial. Let's tell the truth.

Oh, now, break. In that moment, the man who repents and believes on the Lord Jesus, he has a perfect spotless rightness with God provided by God himself, Jesus with thy blood and righteousness. My beauty are my glorious dress, midst flaming worlds, and these arrayed with joy shall I lift up my head.

Everything else in the Christian life follows from them. Being justified by faith, then you get so much else. But that's the basis.

Our peace with God isn't dependent on what we feel, on our attainments, on whether we're victorious or defeated. If I come to Jesus with my defeat, God says, now you're as right as the blood of Christ can make you. Doesn't mean I'm going to go on and sin, oh no.

But I'm not going to have any incentive to quit sin unless I'm assured of that. And this is the great thing which is revealed in the epistle to the reverend. For therein is revealed a rightness with God for people, people.

In other words, the whole thing is designed to give sinners a chance. And I do want, I do covet a ministry that gives sinners a chance. I want to give myself a chance.

And you know, I must say sometimes when we've been helped to talk about these things, you suddenly see full moons appear. You don't need a testimony, you just know there's one, there's another one. Sometimes you're in the last thing, burdens are lifted, blind eyes made to see, hearts come free, and they found God's simple way of rightness with himself.

You know, not even repentance is your righteousness with God. If you think repentance is your righteousness with God, you won't have peace or have a repentance enough. Christ is my righteousness, that precious blood which you'll hear so much more of it.

That's my rightness. But of course I don't get the sense of it until I repent. But I must be careful lest I make my repenting my righteousness.

You don't get right with God merely by repenting. You can repent and still be sad. You can take a stick to yourself.

No, no, it's when you see Jesus having finished the work for you, your perfect spot, this righteousness accepted by God on your behalf. Then the heart is free. But of course you won't see him unless you do repent.

But that's not enough. Jesus, not even my repentance, is my righteousness. But therein is revealed a rightness from God.

Paul says, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ. And he says it's from faith to faith. I looked up one or two people on that, it sounded rather interesting.

It really, it would seem from faith to faith is simply this, it is a righteousness revealed which is by faith. That's the name he gives to it. The righteousness which is by faith.

An old Pauline formula, the righteousness which is by faith, as opposed to that which is by law. You see, we should see that. There's a righteousness which is by law.

If I turn over a new leaf, if I pray more, have better quiet times, then I'll be more right with God. That is the righteousness which is by works or by law. But you find when you're trying to get righteousness that way, you never do pray enough, or you never do turn over that new leaf, you never get peace that way.

Notice this pulls another one all together. The righteousness which is by faith, and is unto all, and upon all them that helplessly come to Jesus as a leader. We're living, this whole thing, this wonderful rightness with God is in the realm where works are excluded, where everything is to empty self.

Faith is receiving Jesus into my emptiness. And here is something that's called, which is available to the feet. And you know you need to remember that because you may think that a speaker is more right with God than you are.

Listen, there's only one righteousness. There's only one wedding garment. How came it so in hither not having a wedding garment? It doesn't matter what the other garment is like underneath, this one's got to cover everything.

And all the guests in that parable were intended to be paralyzed. The one that knows what it is to go to Jesus is as right with God as the blood can make it. And he knows it, he has peace, he has joy, and as we shall see, so much else.

Now this is the great thing. This is what Luther found. He was trying to get his own righteousness, so condemned because he couldn't attain to those standards by means of which he hoped to have peace with God, until slowly God showed him this more excellent way, the gospel way.

And we need to learn it again. The gospel way, gospel holiness, gospel victory. It must be gospel victory.

You've been preaching a lot of victory that's beyond me. Gospel victory. Something's available to feet.

And this is something of the message of grace. I shall, of course I've especially applied it to us for believers, but we can see he was thinking mainly to unbelievers, but the same applies to us. And so there we have it.

For there is revealed the penitent feeble soul, a righteousness of God, which he pleased to credit to the one who admits their wrong. God give us a new willingness to be quick to admit we're wrong. If you don't see this gospel way, you won't be quick.

You see, I can't say I'm wrong, I'm cutting my throat, nothing of the sort. When I confess myself to be a failure and wrong here and wrong there and wrong there, all I do is I exchange the fancy, the ground of my fancy righteousness, which never got me anywhere. The ground of oppression.

I have a peace with God as a sinner, which I never had as a person of all will right. When I begin to see that as a new willingness to take my place as a sinner, that I might enjoy again an experience of a sinner's righteousness in God. Let us pray.

Lord Jesus, we want to thank thee for this hidden secret that thou art revealing to us. Thou knowest, Lord, how we've hoped for another righteousness than that which is given to the penitent. Lord, thou knowest how good thou art to those who say they're wrong.

Oh, we thank thee for the punishing thing that when we say we're wrong, thou dost say we're right. Help us to be willing for that, and help us to see it. Help us to stand up and rejoice in what thou've made to us, Lord Jesus.

And may we go on our day knowing that as we've come to thee and owned up to anything that needs to be owned up, thy blood is cleansed and we're as right with thee as that blood can make us. Give us the joy of it even today. Bless those that are still struggling to attain their own righteousness.

Oh, how often we've all done that. And bless us, we pray thee, as we go our day, on our way. May the joy bell be beginning to ring in our heart.

We ask it in thy dear name. The grace, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen.

Since giving this Bible reading, I've learned that my remarks on the Greek construction of Romans 1 17 are not correct. Whereas it is true that the literal Greek is a righteousness of God, rather than the righteousness of God, I was not correct when I said that of God is not the genitive, but is from God, or out of God, the Greek preposition ek. In actual fact, it is the genitive, and the preposition ek does not occur in this verse.

I'm so sorry that I did not check this with those who have a knowledge of Greek, which I have not. However, this does not alter the message, nor the point I was trying to make, that the gospel offers the penitent one a divine righteousness as opposed to one of his own. I mention this here, lest my inaccuracy on this one point might seem to invalidate the message for those who have a knowledge of Greek.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/18/SID18729.mp3>  
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/roy-hession/the-righteousness-of-faith-part-1/>

# *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](http://www.sermonindex.net)**