

Becoming a Righteous Person

By receiving the Jesus as our Savior we come into a right relationship with God and God imputes to us the righteousness of Jesus.

(John 1:12-13, II Corinthians 5:21, Galatians 3:11)

- 1.) Since we cannot live a righteous life acceptable to God under our own effort, we must receive the free gift of righteousness that God has given us through his Son, Jesus Christ. Have you received Jesus Christ as your Savior?
- 2.) If you have received Jesus then God declares you are righteous in his sight. However, is your life being lived righteously?

A Christian should always be growing in righteousness, with his thoughts, feelings, and acts conforming to God's moral standards.

(Leviticus 19:2, II Corinthians 5:14-15, Ephesians 4:22-24)

Living a righteous life is important evidence that a person has received God's forgiveness and is really a Christian. A person who claims to be a Christian but is not growing in righteousness is either not a Christian or is living disobediently to Jesus Christ.

- 1.) Examine your life right now. Are you growing in righteousness, thus demonstrating that God has indeed changed you from within?

As we grow in righteousness our thoughts, feelings, actions will become more just and our lives will reflect the character of Jesus Christ.

(Romans 1:17, Galatians 5:22-25, I Timothy 6:11)

Being a just person means treating others with equity, holding fast to what is right and shunning that which is evil. Just as God loves righteousness and hates sin, so too we must be growing in the same heart and mind.

- 1.) How has your life changed since you came to know Jesus Christ?
- 2.) How do you want your life to change as a result of what Jesus has done for you?

God's Character & Man's Ethics, Study #4

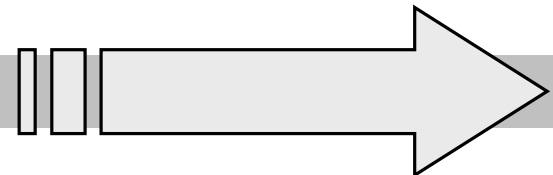
The Righteous Life

Righteousness is an important part of the Christian life. In the Old Testament God instructed Israel to live righteously because God himself was righteous. The people of Israel were to live their lives in a way that reflected who God was, and what he had done for them.

Righteousness is equally important in the Christian life. Because Jesus Christ has already died for our sins and risen from the dead never to die again, we are to live lives that reflect his character and what he has done for us.

The sad part of life is that no one is able to live a life that is pleasing to God by his or her own efforts. The scriptures tell us in Isaiah 64:6 that, "Our righteousness is as filthy rags." Therefore, even though we may make many efforts to do the right thing and always behave in a right manner, because our nature is troubled with sin, we fail to live righteously all of the time. This is one reason why Jesus came, that through faith we might be given his righteousness as a free gift that God will be pleased with us. But even though we can receive this righteousness as a free gift, God still requires us to live a life according to certain standards – standards of righteousness.

In this study we will examine God's righteous requirements and what it takes to live a life that is pleasing to God. Most importantly we will see this righteousness is not simply a matter of doing the right thing, but it is also an important standard of relationships.



God: The Righteous God

Righteousness is that standard by which God always thinks, feels, and does what is morally right.

(Deuteronomy 32:4, Psalm 33:5, Isaiah 45:19)

Because God's character is always true, faithful, and good, his thoughts, feelings, and actions are always right. God always thinks right things, feels right things, and does right things.

- 1.) What kind of character do most people have? Do most people do right things, or do we have a different way of behaving?

Righteousness is more than "doing" what is right, it is also a standard of relationship – the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are always in right relationship to one another.

(John 5:19, 10:30, 14:18-20, 15:3-5)

There is no such thing as doing right or wrong outside of a relationship. We either do what is right or wrong to others, or to ourselves, or to God. We cannot be righteous without a right relationship to God.

- 1.) God's righteousness means that he is always in a right relationship to himself. How can you receive the righteousness of God?

God's righteousness and his justice are the same. God always judges our relationship to him justly and rightly.

(Jeremiah, 9:24, Romans 3:25-26)

Deciding justly between right and wrong, and between that which deserves reward or punishment requires an understanding of right and wrong behavior. God's behavior is the highest standard of righteousness available.

- 1.) Examine your relationship to God, are you in a right standing with him? How do you think God judges your relationship to him?

Jesus: The Righteous Son of God

Jesus Christ felt, thought, and acted exactly as the Father did in all things, demonstrating that he is a righteous Savior.

(John 5:19, 30; 14:9, Colossians 1:15)

Because Jesus is the Son of God in human form, all of his words and actions were the expressions of the eternal God, expressed through an earthly life.

- 1.) Since Jesus felt, thought, and acted exactly like his Heavenly Father, what does this tell you about him?

Jesus spent his life working to bring us into a right relationship (righteous) with his Heavenly Father.

(John 3:17, 10:10; II Corinthians 5:19)

Jesus did what was right by us in that he expelled his life for our sin, paving the way for us to know God personally. Jesus' purpose was to give us a righteous life in right relationship to God.

- 1.) How did Jesus provide a way for you to come into a right relationship with God?

God executed his righteous justice upon Jesus Christ for the sins we have committed, enabling us to have a right relationship with God.

(Isaiah 53:6, Romans 8:3-4, II Corinthians 5:21, I John 4:9-10)

We are not able to live a righteous life, earning God's favor on our own. Isaiah 64:6 says "Our righteousness is as filthy rags." Jesus' death and resurrection allows us to receive his righteousness by faith, as a free gift of God to us.

- 1.) We can live a righteous life in response to what Jesus has already done for us. How can you life become righteous?

