

The Two Righteousnesses I

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Let's go to 1-John 3 and review just a little bit and then we will cover a subject that I'm sure that some of you have never heard discussed quite this way: *The Two Righteousnesses*. I think will help us understand more clearly what God requires of us and why commandment-keeping is also required for salvation. We'll match up a couple of these verses and then we will see if we can understand it in a little clearer light. I want to review just little bit concerning the problem of sin before we get into the *two righteousnesses*.

1-John 3:3: "And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, even as He is pure. Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness. And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. **Everyone who dwells in Him does not practice sin**.... [You cannot have it as the *King James* has it, 'cannot sin'—being an impossibility—otherwise the other verses in John would make no sense.] ...**anyone who practices sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him**. Little children, do not allow anyone to deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. The one who practices sin is of the devil because the devil has been sinning from *the* beginning. For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil. **Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin** because His seed *of begetting* is dwelling within him, and he is not able to *practice* sin because he has been begotten by God. By this *standard* are manifest the children of God and the children of the devil. Everyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, and neither is the one who does not love his brother" (vs 3-10).

Let's go back and just compare a couple of verses here for just a minute. Verses 4 & 8: These two verses parallel each other. Let's read them together and then we'll cover a couple of things. Verse 4: "Everyone who **practices sin**... [living a life of sin as a practice, as a way of living] ...is also practicing lawlessness.... [against law; you don't want law; you don't want to have anything to do with it; you reject it] ...for sin is **lawlessness**.... [v 8]: The one who practices sin is of the devil because the devil has been sinning from *the* beginning.... [Telling us that the devil has been against God's laws from the beginning.] ...For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil."

Now, let's look a little bit about sin and see what happens. Isaiah 43—here's something that's

very important for us to understand: When we leave the righteousness of God, and we know that we are departing from the righteousness of God, and we have God's Spirit in us, God's Spirit will convict us of it until we repent. That's what we see that a lot of people now are beginning to do.

Isaiah 43:24—the last half of the verse: "...you have made Me... [God says to Israel] ...**serve with your sins**... [How do we make God to 'serve with our sins'? *By living in sin when we know we shouldn't live in sin!* So, what does God do then? *He convicts us in heart and in mind and conscious until we respond to that conviction because it's impossible to continue practicing sin when you have the begetting of the Holy Spirit!* Sooner or later

- you're going to be convicted
- you're going to repent
- you are going to change

"...you have made Me serve with your sins; you have wearied Me with your iniquities. I, *even I, am* He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake, and will not remember your sins. Put Me in remembrance... [respond to what God is saying] ...let us plead together; declare yourself, that you may be justified" (vs 24-26). How then are you justified? *By the sacrifice of Christ!*

So, it is a real call to repentance. We have that category of sinning that takes place where a person is living in sin, but knows better than living in sin, is convicted of it and sooner or later comes to the point that they say, 'God, You are right!' God says, 'Let us reason together. Let us plead together. You repent of your sins and I blot them out.'

Matthew 13:37—here is another type of sinner that comes within the midst. These type of sinners are sinning from the beginning, just as the devil was. These are the children of the devil in the midst of the children of God. These cause problems. We've all experienced it—haven't we? And sooner or later God will take care of it.

Matthew 13:37: "And He answered *and* said to them, 'The one Who sows the good seed is the Son of man; and the field is the world; and the good seed, these are the children of the Kingdom... [as expressed by John, 'Here are manifest: the children of God, the children of the devil.' The children of God are practicing righteousness; the children of the devil are not practicing righteousness.]" ...but the tares are the children of the wicked *one*. Now the enemy who sowed them is the devil; and the harvest is *the* end of the age... [So we're going to see this

manifest in our time—right? Have we seen it? *Yes!*] ...and the reapers are the angels. Therefore, as the tares are gathered and consumed in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this age” (vs 37-40).

- God allows the tares to grow with the wheat
- He allows the evil to come within the Church to see IF we love God more than anything else
- or to see how we are going to stand
- what kind of direction are we going to take—because evil people come up within the midst.

Verse 41: “The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all the offenders and **those who are practicing lawlessness**; and they shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (vs 41-42).

I believe that there will be some who commit the *unpardonable sin*—without a doubt. But there will be a lot who will not commit the *unpardonable sin*. That they will repent, because when it comes right down to—even though they have all their problems and difficulties—the final thought in their mind, saying, ‘Okay, I willingly reject God,’ I don’t think those who truly have the Holy Spirit of God will be very many that will do that. There will be some because this tell us that here.

Hebrews 10:26: “For if we **willfully**... [rather than following the will of God. This is different than willingly succumbing to a temptation. This is willful, with forethought, with determination, just as the devil because he sinned from the beginning.] ...**go on sinning** after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment and of fierce fire, which will devour the adversaries of God.... [we just read that in Matt. 13] ...*Consider this*: anyone who rejects the law of Moses dies without mercy under the *testimony* of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has regarded the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, as an unholy thing, and has scorned the Spirit of grace? For we know Him Who has said, “Vengeance belongs to Me. I will recompense!” says the Lord.’ And again, ‘The Lord will judge His people.’.... [Here’s New Testament doctrine]: ...*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*” (vs 26-31).

That is, IF you be in this spiritual condition—a very fearful thing! That’s why those who die in the faith have a special and a particular blessing which alone comes from God.

Now, let’s look at the other two verses here and see how they connect. 1-John 3:5: “And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Everyone who dwells in Him does not *practice* sin; anyone who *practices* sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him. Little children, do not allow anyone to deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous” (vs 5-7).

How can you be as righteous as Christ is righteous? That’s the question! Let’s cover this a little bit more in detail and let’s talk about the *two righteousnesses*. There are two righteousnesses that God requires. I think this will help us understand *justification by faith* a little bit more. First of all, let’s come to Deuteronomy, the fourth chapter, and let’s see what God said of the *righteousness* that God gave to the children of Israel.

Deuteronomy 4:1: “And now, O Israel, hearken to the statutes and to the judgments which I teach you, in order to do them, so that you may live and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers gives to you. You shall not add to the word which I command you; neither shall you take away from it, so that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you” (vs 1-2). What did they do immediately? *Started taking away and started adding to!* That became their sin just as much as transgressing the commandments of God.

Verse 6: “And you shall keep and do *them*... [all the commandments, statutes and judgments of God] ...for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes and say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’ For what nation is so great whose God is so near to them, as the LORD our God is, whenever we call upon Him? And what great nation has statutes and judgments that are so righteous as all this law which I set before you today?” (vs 6-8). So, it was to be *righteousness*.

Everyone will say, ‘Okay, that was for the nation of Israel.’ Let’s go to Romans, the third chapter, and let’s understand something very important. As I’ve said recently and I’ll say again: **God requires that all human beings keep His laws in the letter of the law!** Most people don’t comprehend that because they say, ‘God gave the law to Israel and it’s for Israel.’ God requires *all human beings* to keep the law.

Romans 3:20: “...for through the law is the knowledge of sin.”

- the law tells us what’s right
- the law tells what sin is

We also know in Romans 4:15: “For the law works out wrath; because **where no law is, there is no transgression.**”

Romans 3:9: “What then? Are we of ourselves better?... [‘We Jews because we received the law.’] ...Not at all! For we have already charged both Jews and Gentiles—ALL—with being under sin.” IF there was no law, there would be no sin. So, how can God hold all nations responsible for sin unless He requires that they keep His laws? *He cannot!* But the fact that He does and says that they’re *all* under sin show that there is the righteousness that God expects of all human beings: **to keep His laws in the letter of the law!** That’s why that in almost every nation there are laws against adultery, murder and thievery. Are those not part of the laws of God? *Yes!* Do those who transgress those considered sinners? *Yes!*

Verse 10: “Exactly as it is written: ‘For there is not a righteous one—not even one!.... [Why? *This is talking about perfect righteousness.* There is none! Are all sinners? *Yes!* Even in the first righteousness that is required: to keep the laws of God in the letter of the law? *Yes!*] ...There is not one who understands; there is not one who seeks after God. They have all gone out of the way; together they have *all* become depraved. There is not *even* one who is practicing kindness. **No, there is not so much as one!**” (vs 10-12). That is when you get down to the real heart and core of human nature.

Verse 13: “‘Their throats *are* like an open grave; with their tongues they have used deceit; *the* venom of asps *is* under their lips... [It sounds like Washington, D.C.; I tell you, the things going on there are just unreal. This is a whole summary of all human endeavor and all human ways.] ...whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness; their feet *are* swift to shed blood; destruction and misery *are* in their ways; and *the* way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes’ Now then, we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law... [That is **everyone!**]...so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore, by works of law there shall no flesh be justified before Him...”(vs 13-20). The *first righteousness* cannot justify you to God. There is no way, because it is required!

Now, let’s take another little look at Job’s life. Job had the first righteousness—the *letter of the law* righteousness. That’s why the book of Job is so important. When it talks about Job being perfect and upright, it means in the letter of the law he was perfect and he was upright. Was that enough? We know the story. Satan came and said ‘Let him be in my hand.’ So God said, ‘He’s in your hand.’ God

took away everything that he had. Job 1:22: “In all this Job did not sin, nor charge God foolishly.”

So then again, Satan came before God and said, ‘Yes, well, You know, you just took away all the physical things that he had. Skin for skin, let me touch him and he’ll curse You to Your face.’ God says, ‘Okay, you go ahead and touch him, but you can’t take his life.’ So then Job was smitten with boils from head to toe. I don’t know anyone who’s really been afflicted that bad. I have never, never met anyone who had boils from head to toe. I know one is plenty bad enough. Just one! Have them so bad that all you could do is just kind of scrape them; throw ashes on them to try and dry them up. Job sat for seven days without saying a word. His wife said, ‘Go ahead and curse God and get it over.’ He didn’t do it. His friends came over and said, ‘Oh Job came along and said, ‘Oh, Job, you’re just a rotten sinner, because you know that God doesn’t punish unless there is sin.’

It’s very interesting all the things that are said here. Every philosophy and justification of religion, reason for life, reason for death, reason for tragedy is here in the whole book of Job. Job got so angry and upset that he said, concerning God:

Job 9:32: “For *He* is not a man, as I *am*, that I should answer Him, *that* we should come together in [judgment] court... [He wanted to go to court! That’s what he’s saying.] ...there is no umpire... [a referee, a mediator] ...between us... [‘What God has done to me is unfair.’] ...*who* might lay his hand upon us both” (vs 32-33). This went on and on and you can read it all.

Eliphaz the Temanite was talking to Job and Job was saying what he had done and how good he was, and so forth. That only made Job more angry because he knew that that *first righteousness* was required, but yet, he was wondering why he was being afflicted.

Job 22:1: “And Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said, ‘Can a man be profitable to God, or can a wise man be profitable to Him?’” What can you add to God? What profit are you to God? ‘You’re so high and mighty, Job. *Is it* any pleasure to the Almighty that you are righteous... [‘Job, it doesn’t count! Why are trying to be good and then come along and fool us and say you didn’t sin.’] ...or is it a gain *to Him* that you make your ways blameless?’” (vs 1-3). So, this argument went on and on and on. Great philosophies going back and forth! All the while he’s sitting there scraping potsherds, puss, blood, ashes, flies, maggots. When he said, ‘The worms destroy my flesh’ he was looking at maggots in his flesh. You talk about a creepy, crawly situation.

Job 27:1 And Job continued his speech, and said, ‘As God lives, He has denied me justice... [that’s unfair of You, God] ...and the Almighty has made my soul bitter. As long as my breath *is* in me, and the breath of God *is* in my nostrils, my lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit. Far be it from me that I should declare you to be right... [you three sitting in front of me] ...until I die I will not retract my integrity from me.... [Now he’s beginning to look back and see everything he’s ever done is good—which is the **first righteousness**—and he’s really getting upset.] ...I hold fast my righteousness, and I will not let it go; my heart shall not shame me so long as I live” (vs 1-6). *I’ve been honest through and through, in every cell of my body!*

“Let my enemy be like the wicked, and he who rises up against me as the unrighteous. For what *is* the hope of the hypocrite, though he has gained *much*, when God takes away his life? Will God hear his cry when trouble comes upon him? Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God?” (vs 7-10). *As I have called upon God.* So, he’s really getting himself worked up in a frenzy.

Job 29:14—this is the classic one: “**I** put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my justice *was* like a robe and a diadem. **I** was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. **I** was a father to the poor; and the cause which **I** did not know, **I** searched out. **I** broke the fangs of the wicked, and plucked the prey out of his teeth. Then **I** said, “**I** shall die in **my** nest, and I shall multiply **my** days like the sand.” **My** root *was* spread out to the waters, and the dew lay all night upon **my** branch. **My** glory *was* fresh in **me**, and my bow was renewed in **my** hand. They listened to **me**, and waited, and kept silent at **my** counsel” (vs 14-21). *I was so perfect that every word that dropped out of my lips they were waiting to hear.*

After **my** words they did not speak again; and **my** speech dropped on them. And they waited for **me** like the rain... [Ohhh, here’s almighty, righteous Job!] ...and they opened their mouth wide *as* for the latter rain. **I** smiled on them *when* they did not believe; and the light of **my** countenance they did not cast down. **I** chose out their way, and sat as chief; and **I** lived like a king in the army, as one *who* comforts the mourners” (vs 22-25). So he was ‘perfect’—and he knew it! Ask him; he could tell you.

The first righteousness can’t save you! But, it is required! Finally, when you get to that point, and you ever wonder why your friends quit talking to you, maybe read Job 32:1: “And these three men ceased to answer Job, **because he was righteous in his own eyes.**” Job didn’t understand one basic

thing. Put in your margin: 1-Cor. 4:7—**you have nothing that you didn’t receive!** Beginning with your life, the creation that God has made, the laws that God has given—*everything!* There is nothing in this world that anyone has that they didn’t receive. Job didn’t understand that at this point! So all three of the men ceased to talk to him because he was righteous in his own eyes.

Verse 2: “Then was kindled the anger of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram. His wrath burned against Job, **because he had justified himself rather than God....** [The only One Who is **always righteous** in everything that is done **is God!** Not a man; God!] ...Also his wrath was kindled against his three friends, because they had found no answer and *yet* had condemned Job” (vs 2-3).

So then he stood up and said (paraphrasing): ‘Well, I’ve been sitting around here listening to you guys argue back and forth all this time. I sat here as the youngest one amongst you and I was listening to all of this wisdom pouring forth from you old men, you great men, and I’ve learned one thing: Great men are not always wise! What I’ve heard going on here has really been kind of stupid! I want to start out and I want to tell you something. First of all, I’m here because of the Spirit of God that created me. I want to tell you a little something about God.’ He comes right to the heart of the argument:

Job 34:5: “For Job has said, ‘I am righteous; but God has denied me justice.’” So, that was the whole heart and core of what he was saying.

Job 35:1: “And Elihu answered and said, ‘Do you think this to *be* right, you *that* say, “My righteousness *is* more than God’s?”’” That was Job’s whole problem. But this righteousness that he said was more than God’s was only what God required anyway. That’s why we’re all sinners. All are under sin! Even if you keep all of this *first righteousness* perfectly, you don’t have the *second righteousness*, which leads to life. That’s what you need.

- The *first righteousness* is for this physical life only, which is required of God by all human beings.
- The *second righteousness*, we will see, comes from God for eternal life.

Verse 13: “Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it.... [Why? *Because all men are vanity!* Though they are required to keep the *first righteousness!* (the book of Eccles.—where it starts out: ‘Vanity of vanities, all is vanity, says the preacher.’) God won’t regard it.] ...How *much less* when you say you do not see Him! The cause *is* before Him; you must wait for Him. And now because it is not so, He has visited in anger yet he

does not understand even his great extremity... [You're not even looking to God, Job. You're only looking to yourself!] ...Therefore does Job open his mouth in vain; **he multiplies his words without knowledge**” (vs 13-16). In other words, Job, *all your wisdom is stupidity!*

Job 36:1: “Elihu also proceeded and said, ‘Bear with me a little, and I will show you that I have yet to speak on God’s behalf. I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and I will ascribe righteousness to my Maker.... [not to me, to my Maker!] ...For truly my words are not false; He who is perfect in knowledge is with you.... [that is God] ...Behold, God is mighty, yet He does not despise any; He is mighty in strength of understanding’” (vs 1-5). Then he goes forth and he keeps talking with Job. Finally, he ends up to where then he went as far as he could.

Job has to face the reality of God! God was very kind. After Job had gone through all the things that He had gone through. Job 38:1 “Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, ‘Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?... [Did I hear some things being said down here which were really not very smart?] ...Now gird up your loins like a man; for I will demand of you, and you shall answer Me.... [Job, here are some britches, you try these on for size.] ...Where... [if you want to have a betwixt between us] ...were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare it, if you have understanding! Who has determined its measurements, if you know? Or who has stretched the line upon it? On what are the foundations fastened to? Or who laid its cornerstone’” (vs 1-6). Then He talks about how He made and created everything that there is.

Verse 18: “Have you surveyed the breadth of the earth? Declare it, if you know it all!... [Let’s hear it, Job!] ...Where is the way where light dwells?... [Tell Me!] ...And as for darkness, where is the place thereof” (vs 18-19). Then God goes on saying, ‘Job, you look out here at the whole universe—did you do this?’

Job 40:1: “And the LORD answered Job and said, ‘Shall he who contends with the Almighty **instruct Him**?... [Are you really, Job, going to come and teach Me? That’s what He’s saying.] ...He who reproves God, let him answer it.’... [Anyone going to get mad at God? What could Job say?] ...And Job answered the LORD and said, ‘Behold, I am vile!... [I guess!] ...What shall I answer You? I will lay my hand on my mouth.... [It’s about time!] ...Once I have spoken; but I will not answer; yea, twice, but I will proceed no further.’ And the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, ‘Gird up your loins now like a

man. I will demand you, and you declare unto Me. Will you even annul My judgment? Will you condemn Me so that you may be righteous? And have you an arm like God? Or can you thunder with a voice like His?... [Now, Job, stand up! Let’s see you do this]: ...Deck yourself now with majesty and excellency, and array yourself with glory and beauty. Cast abroad the rage of your wrath; and behold everyone who is proud, and abase him. Look on everyone who is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place. Hide them in the dust together; and bind their faces in darkness. Then I will also confess to you that your own [righteousness] right hand can save you” (vs 6-14).

All the first righteousness is required, but it can’t save you! That’s what to understand. This is where the Protestants get it all so confused! They say that one set of righteousness is required of the Gentiles, another set of righteousness is required of the Israelites and we have a better set of righteousness, because now we can ignore the commandments of God and choose which ones we have. Does that not sound like Job? Can their own righteousness of Sunday-keeping save them? *No!*

Now let’s understand a verse or two that is a little difficult, but I think now we can begin to understand just a little bit of it. Let’s go to Galatians, the third chapter. Most people in the Church of God who keep the commandments of God—and unfortunately, most Churches of God do preach a form of salvation by works, because they don’t understand the first righteousness is required. In other words, God could not convict the whole world of sin unless the commandments of God were binding upon everyone, because *where there is no law there is no sin!* It’s that simple!

(go to the next track)

Here’s something to understand: Salvation is derived from law-keeping, but law-keeping is required. Salvation is a gift of eternal life which only comes from God—which then is the **second righteousness** that *you cannot earn!*

- You cannot earn the second righteousness!
- You cannot, by law-keeping, qualify for it!
- You qualify by repenting, not by doing good!
- Did Job qualify for eternal life by all the goodness that he did? *No!*
- Was all of his righteousness good enough for eternal life? *No!*

Now you can understand Galatians 3:21: “Is the law then contrary to the promises of God? **MAY IT NEVER BE! For if a law had been given that had the power to give life...** [eternal life; that’s

what it's talking about. There is no law which can give eternal life.] ...**then righteousness**... [the second kind of righteousness, unto salvation] ...**would indeed have been by law.**" But, the whole experience of Job is telling that the ***second righteousness***—which is required for salvation—is not produced by law-keeping. Let's look at that and analyze it and understand it. Let's go back to Romans, the third chapter.

Romans 3:20: "Therefore, by works of law there shall no flesh be justified before Him... [By keeping the laws, any law, that is not going to qualify you for salvation, because 'justified' means *to be qualified for salvation in His sight.*] (the ***second righteousness*** is this): ...But now, the **righteousness of God** that is separate from law has been revealed..." (vs 20-21). Is there a righteousness with the letter of the law? ***Yes! A righteousness of law-keeping!***

- all Your commandments are righteous
- all Your statutes are true
- commandments are true

So there is a letter of the law righteousness, which God requires of all human beings. Now, there is a ***spiritual righteousness*** which ***must be given***—you can't earn it! There is no law to bring this righteousness to you. ***This second righteousness must be given***—that's why it's called a *gift*, and it comes through ***grace***.

Verse 21: "But now, *the* righteousness of God *that is* separate from law has been revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets; even *the* righteousness of God *that is* through *the* faith of Jesus Christ, toward all and upon all those who believe; for there is no difference" (vs 21-22). ***This righteousness comes by belief!*** It is given to you as a gift *because you believe*. That's what we're talking about here.

Verse 31: "Are we, then, abolishing law through faith? MAY IT NEVER BE! Rather, we are establishing law." Why? ***Because your heart is made right!*** That's how you establish it.

Now, let's look at Abraham and what he did. Romans 4:1: "What then shall we say *that* our father Abraham has found with respect to *the* flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has a basis for boasting, but not before God.... [Just like Job. Job gloried before God and God finally said, 'Look, Job, not right.'] ...For what does the Scripture say? 'And Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness'" (vs 1-3).

We have another story about Abraham, and this is where a lot of people get really confused. James 2:18: "But someone is going to say, 'You

have faith, and I have works.' *My answer is:* You prove your faith to me through your works, and I will prove my faith to you through my works.... [This does require action, absolutely!] ...Do you believe that God is one? You do well *to believe this*. Even the demons believe—and tremble *in fear*.... [The fact that a person believes in God is no great merit to anything. In other words, God is saying that if you don't believe in a Creator God you're an idiot—even unconverted! Worse than the demons because they believe in God.] ...But are you willing to understand, O foolish man, that **faith without works is dead?** Was not Abraham our father justified by works... (vs 18-21).

Paul is saying that he was *justified by faith*—he believed God. Do these two verses contradict each other? ***No!*** Certain things require a belief, because you can't see them. Certain things require action, based upon that faith, because it's something you are to do. ***Both are correct! Both are right!*** But these then, being justified by works, are works of faith and belief, based upon what God has said.

"Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac, his own son, upon the altar? **Do you not see that faith was working together with his works, and by works his faith was perfected?** And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, 'Now Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness'; and he was called a friend of God" (vs 21-23).

Let's just review these two accounts: Let's go back to Genesis 15 and we will see the kind of righteousness which is imputed. It is given because it is a righteousness you cannot earn. Then we're going to see how that is even more magnified in the New Testament for us.

Genesis 15:1: "After these things the Word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, 'Fear not, Abram, I *am* your shield and your exceedingly great reward.' And Abram said, 'Lord GOD, what will You give me since I go childless, and the heir of my house *is* this Eliezer of Damascus?' And Abram said, 'Behold, You have given no seed to me... [*I'm going to make it easy on You, God—isn't that nice of me to do so?*] ...and lo, one born in my house is my heir.' And behold, the Word of the LORD *came* to him saying, 'This man shall not be your heir; but he that shall come forth out of your own loins shall be your heir.' And He brought him outside and said, 'Look now toward the heavens and number the stars—if you are able to count them.' And He said to him, 'So shall your seed be'" (vs 1-5).

What work was required? ***Faith!*** No work! There was no work required! God said, 'Look! Can you count them?' It's an impossible task! I mean,

they're still counting today, and they say there are billions and billions and billions more! When they think they're done counting, they think, 'Boy! We've missed this part of the universe and there are billions more stars and galaxies over there.'

"And he believed in the LORD.... [and that belief was] ...accounted it to him for righteousness" (v 6). Believing God, by faith, is the very first step to the **righteousness which God gives you**, and you can't earn that righteousness.

Genesis 22—here's the account that James was talking about. So, we have the two accounts: We have the one where *belief* is required; we have the one where *a work* is required. But even the work cannot save you even though it's required. The work must be *based on faith*, because you believe that God is. What does it say concerning faith? *The one who comes to God must believe that He is and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him!* Here in Gen. 22 came the final test. He said, 'Okay, I want you to offer an offering.'

Genesis 22:1: "And it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, 'Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' And He said, 'Take now your son, your only *son* Isaac, whom you love, and go into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell you'" (vs 1-2).

You know the rest of the story. God intervened just when he was ready to raise the knife and cut the throat of Isaac. And I'm sure, as I've said many times, that God supernaturally created that ram in thicket. Had it been in the thicket when they were walking up the hill, surely they would have seen it—right? I mean, you would see a ram if you're going up a mountain. So then, **because he obeyed**—based upon belief—**then his righteousness was perfected**. Which is telling us then, the same thing with the righteousness that God gives us, because we believe and we have faith, that is the **second righteousness**, which then God adds to that righteousness. This follows right along with what we just read concerning Abraham and concerning the **second righteousness**:

After He fed the 5,000 with the manna, they chased Him down and found Him and said, 'Oh, boy, what are we going to do so we can get bread?' John 6:29 "Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God: that you believe in Him Whom He has sent.'" That belief, by faith, is not contingent upon a law—is it? *No!* This righteousness—believing in Christ—does something special for us, just as it did to Abraham.

Romans 4—Paul goes through and explains all about that he's the 'father of the circumcision and

the uncircumcision' and we come all the way down here to Romans 4:20: "And he did not doubt the promise of God..." It's going to be really fantastic— isn't it? We're going to be there in the first resurrection. Can you imagine what it's going to be when God says to Abraham, 'Abraham, come here.' And he stands right up alongside Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ says, 'Now, Abraham, because you believed Me here is the fulfillment of what you believed. All of these are your children.' Not only just the physical children but now all of these are the spiritual children. 'If we're Christ's then we're Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise'—right? *Yes!*

"And he did not doubt the promise of God through unbelief; rather, he was strengthened in the faith, giving glory to God... [Just the opposite of Job. Job was looking to himself and giving himself all the glory. He was trusting in what he did rather than trusting in God.] ...for he was fully persuaded that what He has promised, He is also able to do.... [God could do it! Though Abraham could not count the stars, God could do it! 'Is there anything too difficult for God?' *No!*] ...As a result, it was also imputed [counted, given] to him for righteousness. But it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; rather, *it was also written* for our sakes, to whom it shall be imputed—to those who believe in Him Who raised Jesus our Lord from *the* dead; Who was delivered for our offenses and was raised for our justification" (vs 20-25).

The **second righteousness** is **that spiritual justification which is a gift of the forgiveness of sins and the right standing before God!** No man can earn the right standing and the righteousness of Christ!

- Who alone earned the righteousness of Christ? *Christ did!*
- Can you do better than Christ? *No!*
- Can you do greater than Christ? *No!*

Therefore, you can't earn it. It must be given as a gift upon repentance! We receive this justified gift of righteousness through belief.

Romans 5:1: "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.... [Then it shows how the whole process of the Christian life works]: ...Through Whom we also have access by faith into this grace... [When you get on your knees and pray, you don't see God, you don't hear God, you're not in a temple, and God says that this is so important that this be 'between you and Me that you go in your closet and you pray alone in secret.' That's by faith!] ...into this grace..." (vs 1-2).

- What is this grace that we are accepted,

that we have given to us the *grace of Christ*?

- That we have given to us the *righteousness of Christ*?
- That we have given to us the *right standing* that only Christ has?

That is the gift! Righteousness #1—commandment-keeping and law-keeping—never, *never, never*, NEVER earns the *second righteousness*! But the *first righteousness* is required just to exist in this world. The *second righteousness* is required for salvation, and that is only by faith through Christ.

“...this grace in which we stand, and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God. And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations, realizing that tribulation brings forth endurance, and endurance *brings forth* character, and character *brings forth* hope.... [You have to go through quite a bit before you come to the point that you really have and understand that hope. Once you have the experience then you have the hope.] ...And the hope of *God* never makes us ashamed because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts...” (vs 2-5). That is part of the grace and justification and *righteousness #2*.

- Who are we that we should receive the Spirit of God?
- Who are we that we should receive the love of God?

That’s what it’s talking about! “And the hope of *God* never makes us ashamed because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us” (v 5). Then he goes on and shows how sin came into the world and so forth.

Verse 17: “For if by the offense of the one man death reigned by the one... [I’ve heard people say, ‘When I see Adam I’m going to ask why did you do that?’ He made all mankind suffer.] ...how much more shall those who receive the abundance of grace and the **gift of righteousness...**” *Righteousness #2* is a *gift*! What kind of righteousness is that that can only be given? You can’t earn it. Granted, we’ll give you *righteousness #1* over here, all of it, perfect, as Job. You still can’t earn *righteousness #2*; it is a gift! It says you can’t earn it, *it must be given!* Since you don’t have it inherently, it must be imputed; that is credited to you, given to you, *a gift!* Let’s see what kind of righteousness this is. It’s by the faith of Jesus! *It is a gift!*

Galatians 2:16: “Knowing that a man is not justified by works of law...” Now you can understand it—right? Justified to what? *To eternal*

life! There is no law you can keep which will be a guarantee of eternal life! You must be justified by the sacrifice of Christ and that justification only comes by repentance and belief. Therefore, all the Sabbath-keeping—although God requires it of everyone—is not going to make you qualified for eternal life. It doesn’t mean, as the Protestants say, ‘Well we can keep any day.’ NO! *Because Sunday is not required!* Sunday is worse because it’s *your own* righteousness. The Sabbath is God’s *righteousness #1*.

“Knowing that a man is not justified by works of **law**... [In the Greek, the definite article *the* (KJV) is not here. It’s ‘works of law’—*any law*, Judaism, whatever, does not justify you.] ...but through *the* faith of Jesus Christ...” (v 16). It doesn’t show this in the *King James*, but in the Greek it means *Jesus’ own faith*. It’s the only thing that justifies you. So the *gift of righteousness* is Christ’s faith in you; the Holy Spirit in you. So that within you, you develop the *righteousness and the faith* of Jesus Christ.

- Did Jesus believe?
- Did Jesus have faith?
- Did Jesus have love?
- Was Jesus always righteous before God?
Yes!
- Was Jesus always justified before God?
Yes!

That’s what it’s talking about. “...we also have believed in Christ Jesus in order that we might be justified by *the* faith of Christ, and not by works of law; because by works of law shall no flesh be justified.... [for salvation!] ...Now then, if we are seeking to be justified in Christ, *and* we ourselves are found to be sinners, *is* Christ then *the* minister of sin? MAY IT NEVER BE!... [No! It’s your own sinful nature that’s doing it—not Christ!] ...For if I build again those things that I destroyed, I am making myself a transgressor. For I, through law, died to law, in order that I may live to God” (vs 16-19). Because the ‘wages of sin is death.’ He died unto law that He might live with the Spirit of God, justified by Christ, the *gift of righteousness* imputed to him, which can only come from God by belief and faith in Christ and His sacrifice.

Verse 20: “I have been crucified with Christ... [through the operation of baptism (Rom 6)] ...yet I live. *Indeed*, it is no longer I... [He’s not living for himself] ...but Christ lives in me.... [That’s the only purpose for his continuing in the flesh.] ...For *the life* that I am now living in *the* flesh, I live by faith—that **very faith of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me.**” That’s what we are to believe! That is *righteousness #2*—or the *second righteousness*—

- which you *can't* earn
- which you *can't* work for
- which you *can't* qualify for without the sacrifice of Christ

There is no law given under heaven whereby you may keep that law and have eternal life. Law does not give eternal life. The second justification in righteousness is that justification which qualifies you for it, which is by the "...faith of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness is through *works of law*... [Now do you understand that? If it can come by any law you can do]: ...then Christ died in vain" (vs 20-21). Because the *second righteousness* can only be given and imputed to you; **it cannot be earned!** If you have all of your sins forgiven and you are told to walk in the commandments of God in faith—should we then keep the commandments of God? *Yes!* How?

Let's come back to Romans 7:6 and see; here's how we're to do it. "But now we have been released from the law because we have died *to that* in which we were held so that we might serve in newness of *the* spirit, and not in *the* oldness of *the* letter." The same law, but now in newness of spirit with Christ *in* us, with understanding motivated by the grace and love of God and the Spirit of God. That is how we are to conduct our lives with the *righteousness #2*.

With that in mind, let's go back and review just a few verses in 1-John and let's see why then it has been written in the way that it has been. 1-John 1:7: "However, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin.... [That is the *second righteousness: is cleansing, ongoing.*] (v 9): ...If we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The grace and justification.

1-John 2:1: "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.... [It's in that subjective tense: *may not sin.*] ...And *yet*, if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ *the* Righteous—and He is *the* propitiation for our sins; and not for our sins only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world" (vs 1-2). Which then, God is going to take care of in His time.

Notice what follows right along with it. When we have this righteousness and this justification and this standing before God, v 3: "And by this *standard* we know that we know Him: **if we keep His commandments**.... [How? *In newness of spirit*—that's how!] ...The one who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar,

and the Truth is not in him.... [Which means Christ is not in him. Why? *Because Jesus said, 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life'*—correct? *Yes!*] ...On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word..." (vs 3-5). It goes beyond just commandment-keeping. If you are justified with the gift of righteousness and God says,

- Every time I view you, I view you through the eyes of Christ.
- Every time to come to Me and repent of your sins, Christ is there to forgive.
- Every time you ask in faith, I view it as Christ asking.

That's a tremendous gift—isn't it? *Oh, yes!* "On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word, truly in this one the love of God **is being perfected**.... [On an ongoing basis.] ...By this *means* we know that we are in Him.... [You see how the *second righteousness* brings what the *first righteousness* cannot do. Always remember: There are *two righteousnesses* of God!] ...Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked" (vs 5-6).

Now we can answer this question: How is that you are righteous as Christ is righteous? That's a pretty bold statement—isn't it? You think on that for a minute! That is really a pretty bold statement. 1-John 3:7: "Little children, do not allow anyone to deceive you; **the one who practices righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous.**"

That is the *second righteousness*, which is **imputed and given by God as a gift!** So, not only do we want *righteousness #1*, we want *righteousness #2*, which is the very faith and the righteousness of Jesus Christ—given to us as a gift. It's given to us

- to inspire us to want to do better!
- to go beyond!
- to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and being!

That's why it's given. **So let's attain to righteousness #2!**

Questions from audience:

- Under the Old Covenant, were people required to keep righteousness #1? *Yes!*
- Are people in the world today are required to keep *righteousness #1*? *Yes!*

Righteousness #2 is by the calling of God. That's why God does not require the world to keep *righteousness #2*. They can't, because they don't have the Spirit of God! Only those who have the Spirit of God can keep *righteousness #2*.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 John 3:3-10, 4, 8
- 2) Isaiah 43:24-26
- 3) Matthew 13:37-42
- 4) Hebrews 10:26-31
- 5) 1 John 3:5-7
- 6) Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8
- 7) Romans 3:20
- 8) Romans 4:15
- 9) Romans 3:9-20
- 10) Job 1:22
- 11) Job 9:32-33
- 12) Job 22:1-3
- 13) Job 27:1-10
- 14) Job 29:14-25
- 15) Job 32:1-3
- 16) Job 34:5
- 17) Job 35:1, 13-16
- 18) Job 36:1-5
- 19) Job 38:1-6, 18-19
- 20) Job 40:1-14
- 21) Galatians 3:21
- 22) Romans 3:20-22, 31
- 23) Romans 4:1-3
- 24) James 2:18-23
- 25) Genesis 15:1-6
- 26) Genesis 22:1-2
- 27) John 6:29
- 28) Romans 4:20-25
- 29) Romans 5:1-5, 17
- 30) Galatians 2:16-21
- 31) Romans 7:6
- 32) 1 John 1:7, 9
- 33) 1 John 2:1-6
- 34) 1 John 3:7

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Corinthians 4:7
- Ecclesiastes
- Romans 6

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