

# Living in the GIFT of YHVH's Righteousness

## Faith in Yeshua's life in us, and we in Him.

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Philip Shields sermons

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**Summary:** *I consider this to be one of the most important topics to understand in our lives as chosen children of YHVH. After we repent, accept Yeshua's sacrifice and have our sins forgiven, then what? How do we ever become righteous enough to be worthy of the Kingdom of God? Hear about the seldom discussed gift our Father offers us by faith that will see us to perfection at the resurrection. That and so much more are discussed.*

**Key words:** Righteousness, God's righteousness, YHVH's righteousness, Gift of righteousness, imputed righteousness, obedience to the law, written law, oral law, Phil. 3:9-11; 2 Cor. 5:17-21; Rom. 9:30-31; Romans 10:1-4; Matthew 5:17-20; Gal. 2:16, 21; Rom. 5:17.

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Hello everyone, I'm Philip Shields, host of Light on the Rock, where we proclaim YHVH (Yehowah, or some say Yahweh) and our Savior Yeshua the promised Messiah, known by most as Jesus Christ. Yes, Father is YHVH. Where your Bible says "the LORD", I will use the original Hebrew YHVH, used almost 7,000 times in Scripture —as that is our Creator's name (wrongly published as "the LORD"). See Psalm 83:18; Isa. 42:8; Jer. 36:21.

Today we're talking about the only kind of righteousness that will allow us entrance into the kingdom of YHVH. Without this kind of goodness, we simply won't be there. There are counterfeit teachings about our own righteousness from the Law – or the teaching that Yehowah's teachings/laws have been done away with.

I also want to be sure we understand that Father is offering us FAR MORE than just forgiveness of our sins in the blood of His Son, who died for us. Far more. What happens after we have been forgiven? And after we're immersed/baptized and receive the Holy Spirit in the laying on of hands – what happens? We still sin. You do and I do. So what is Father doing about that? What has He offered? How will any of us ever "make it" into His Kingdom if we continue to remain imperfect, continue to periodically sin and fall short of His glory? There is GIFT He has for us and there is something He credits us with that we MUST understand, or we will continue to feel like failures. We certainly won't feel like "the new Creation" we are supposed to be.

After this teaching today, I plan to give at least 2 sermons on traditions of man that have crept into Judaism and Christianity that have corrupted the true message. So I thought this sermon would be a good foundation first. Religiosity is not the same as true righteousness. What Abba, our dear Father wants, is a walk and intimacy with us, which we can have through Yeshua His Son. He wants to be worshiped in spirit and truth – not in ornate ceremonies or liturgies that have little to do with what we read in Scripture. Most religions and groups have been infected by man-made traditions, rules, customs and teachings that have no basis in scripture.

So before I start those 2 sermons, I wanted to give THIS message which is about the one and only kind of TRUE righteousness, and how it is from GOD, and not from all our human efforts and especially not from human traditions. Again, this message is also about the huge, huge GIFT we have from Father that credits our spiritual bank account, as I'll explain.

SO much of Catholicism, Judaism, and Protestantism and *most* religions, are steeped in man-made rules and customs that make a person feel they've attained righteousness, if they practice certain customs, do certain things, dress a certain way – much of which has little to do with actual scripture! What Yehowah wants is a loving, obedient and close relationship! He wants to walk and talk with us directly, personally. He doesn't want man-made rules added to HIS rules or go-betweens. HE is our life, HE is our righteousness, and HE is our love.

**Today I'll be talking about the ONE true righteousness there is, that allows us into the kingdom of God, and how we receive it.** I've spoken on it a few times before, but I feel so strongly about this, that I am sure I'll speak on it periodically. I gave a 3 part series several years ago in **Jan-Feb 2007** on this very topic. You can review those too if you wish more detail. I've also given sermons on The New Creation we are supposed to be. *And I'll explain why being forgiven for our past sins is not enough. Father knows that – and so He has offered even more than just the forgiveness of sin, as you shall see.*

#### **WHY am I discussing this topic again?**

- Believers won't and can't *have the joy and the peace of mind* of knowing His righteousness and receiving the gift of God, vs. trying to be good enough themselves for the kingdom
- To understand how we witness to His resurrection in OUR lives. More on this later.
- To avoid the 2 extreme ditches that the majority fall into; ditches that may keep one out of the kingdom if we don't recognize it!
- To understand there's only one level of righteousness acceptable in Father's kingdom, and it sure isn't yours or mine!

### **THE TWO DITCHES ON THE TEACHING ABOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS**

**The first ditch, a huge and common error, is the ditch of believing we attain righteousness – and even holiness -- by our own works, our own obedience**, our own observance of every “do and don't” – *until somehow WE finally qualify for the Kingdom*, basically on our merit. These people practice “spiritual evolution” – believing that somehow given enough time, we can become good enough or righteous enough to make it finally into the kingdom of God. These folks will claim they know they are saved by grace and by Yeshua, but ***act*** as if their salvation is up to them. I really don't think *many* of these folks “get it”; they really don't understand this topic. In essence, these folks act like they are their own creator of their own new creation; or that they are their own savior after they accept the initial blood sacrifice of Yeshua and his crucifixion. This group tends not to really understand the ***gift*** of God's righteousness or the concept of “imputed or credited righteousness”. They call that a Protestant fallacy. You won't tend to hear sermons in this group about “imputed righteousness”, though it's all over the book of Romans. And they love Philippians 2:12, but don't read verse 13 that explains and finishes verse 12.

This first ditch represents a common and huge error especially in the Sabbath keeping Church of God groups and Hebrew Roots folks. Many of you may actually believe this first ditch *without fully realizing you do*. This first ditch will keep you from having the joy of His salvation because you are feeling you never quite measure up, you're feeling you keep failing and wonder how YOU are ever going to "make it" into the kingdom.

**The 2<sup>nd</sup> Ditch, on the other extreme, also a huge, huge error, is the teaching that because Yeshua's righteousness covers us if we ask and accept it in faith, then salvation is finished and we can do what we want and never lose salvation.** The extreme teachers say after we receive His imputed righteousness by faith, that there is nothing you can do after that to fall from grace. **This is the "once saved, always saved" crowd** who ignore entire books of the Bible and chapters like Jude, Hebrews chapters 2-3-6 and many others. This group tends to teach that "the Law has been done away" despite the Messiah's clear statement in **Matthew 5:17-20** to the contrary. As Peter says in his epistle, they twist Paul's writings. So they teach we no longer have to be obedient, that everything has been done and we're saved with no chance of failure.

**Both ditches are dangerous fallacies.** I do not teach, believe, or espouse either one, and this sermon does not support either ditch. Certainly the law has NOT been "done away"! I still see stars above me when I look up at night. Look at what Yeshua said:

**Matthew 5:17-20**

**"Do NOT think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. *I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.* 18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. 19 Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I say to you, that ***unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.***"**

**So I am not teaching either of the 2 ditches. But there is the actual teaching of the Bible.** We have to be born again. We have a 2<sup>nd</sup> birth process. Just as none of us could start our own physical life, neither can we start our new birth, our spiritual life, our rebirth, being born again. I believe I have ONE Creator. *The same God who created me physically will also be my Creator spiritually – the Creator of the New Creation we are supposed to be.* I have but one Savior. I am NOT able to save myself. (Many, many misunderstand Philippians 2:12 by not finishing the verse.)

So I think this topic is SO vital, that I feel pushed by Yehowah's spirit to speak on it again. It probably won't be the last time.

If you were here in front of me, I'd like to say "hello" to you by simply saying to each one of you – "Hello Yeshua".

**Why would I begin that way?**

- **Because we are to be witnesses to the resurrection of the living Jesus Christ** - - or Yeshua, as He was called by his mama. HOW are we witnesses? By letting Him live again, walk the earth again – IN you and me. We didn't see the

empty tomb, but **our lives should demonstrate that Christ walks the earth again in each believer.** Paul says he wanted to “*know* Him and the power of HIS resurrection” (**Philippians 3:9-11**) – by letting Yeshua live in him by the Spirit.

- We are each part of the Body of Christ and all those with God's Spirit together make up His body on earth today (**Romans 12:4-5**). So instead of being limited to one body as He was in His first coming, He can now walk the earth again by living again through thousands of believers. Imagine the power we would have to witness to the fact HE LIVES if we would really believe and quit limiting God!
- **We are also called SAINTS of God** – meaning holy ones, set-apart ones for divine use. *It is only by Yeshua living His holy life in us by His Holy Spirit that we are saints, or holy ones.* Paul begins many of his epistles by referring to the brethren as “saints”, “*hagios*” in Greek, meaning “holy ones”. There is only one way we can be holy, and that is to have God be in us or declare us to be set-apart, holy. *You and I cannot make ourselves or anything holy. Only Yehowah can.* So if I call you “Yeshua”, it is because you are holy because He lives in you and you are part of his body. By being a part of his holy body, you are also holy.
- **Only Yeshua's righteousness will get you into the kingdom. We are told that NO unrighteous will be in the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9).** NONE. Not one. “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God”—1 Cor. 6:9. And yet we're also told – that besides Christ – NONE is righteous BY THE PERFECT standards of God anyhow, no not ONE (**Romans 3:10-11**).

So is Yeshua the ONLY one righteous enough for the kingdom? Yes. The standard of righteousness required for the kingdom is God and HIS righteousness (**Matthew 6:33**), not man's righteousness. So only by having Yeshua live in us again will we be in the kingdom of God. That is why I call you “Yeshua” -- for you are part of His body and you are allowing Him to demonstrate – through living in you – what Yeshua was like and is like.

*So this topic today is crucial. If we really understand the message today, we will leave with so much more joy and peace knowing we are covered by the life of our King. He covers us. That makes us love Him more each day and praise Him. It's about our relationship. Eternal life and our calling is not as much about knowledge or coming “into the knowledge of the truth” as it is about coming to know Him, as Paul said his goal was. It's coming to love Him more each day and be in relationship with Him.*

### **The Bible does speak of 2 kinds of righteousness.**

**Philippians 3:5-11** (begins by saying he has no confidence in the flesh –v. 3-4, and I might have some confidence in the flesh...)

“circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee;

6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; **concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.** [repeat]

7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. 8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish,[KJV – dung;

*skubalon, what is thrown to dogs as refuse, including dung and offal from animals]*  
that I may gain Christ [now, in verse 9 we will clearly be shown the 2 righteousness]

**9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ [better: the faithfulness OF Christ], the righteousness which is from God by faith;**

10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.”

**So did you catch that? Paul speaks of 2 kinds of righteousness:**

- “My own righteousness which is from the law”
- “The righteousness which is from God by faith”

The first one is my own, the second one is God’s perfect righteousness. Paul was saying He preferred the best God could do rather than the best he – Paul – could do.

There is righteousness from our own efforts – and it is righteousness, if it is keeping God’s laws. I gave a whole 3 part series of sermons in **January –Feb 2007** about “The Righteousness of the Law or God’s righteousness”. It is called “righteousness”. But righteousness from the law falls short of God’s righteousness as I’ll show you clearly in today’s message. **The law can’t make anyone perfect, Paul says (Hebrews 7:19).** *Nor will human righteousness qualify anyone for entrance into Father’s kingdom.*

**Human righteousness by the law was the righteousness that Job had.** Even YHVH called Job “blameless” (**Job 1:1, 8**). But all that was before Job came to know Yehowah and “see Him”, come to understand Him. Once that happened, we find Job saying “I abhor myself” and “I repent in dust and ashes” (read **Job 42:5-6**). In **Job 40:4**, he even says, after coming to know YHVH -- “I am vile”. There would have been no need to say all that if his human righteousness was good enough. When human righteousness from the law meets God’s righteousness, invariably ours falls short.

Elihu, one of the friends, even said Job was saying his righteousness was better than God’s, and that if Yehowah was present, He’d be taking notes on what Job had to say. What vanity, what conceit. So once we come face-to-face with our Maker through whatever circumstances He sends us, we always will react like Job – “I abhor myself”; or like Paul – “all my righteousness is just do much dung” in comparison, or like Isaiah who records Yehowah saying our best efforts at human goodness is like presenting menstuous, filthy rags (**Isaiah 64:6**) to Him.

**Hebrews 4:16** says we can now come boldly before the throne of grace. But as for me, I don’t feel any confidence on my own merit. None. But **Colossians 3:3** says our lives are now “hidden in Christ in God”. Let that sink in. Now when we come before holy Father in heaven, we’re asking Him to see His perfect son Yeshua – who covers us – and not to see me. I want Him to see Yeshua’s perfection. My life is hidden in Christ in God” remember – **Colossians 3:3**.

The righteousness required for eternal life is that which Christ had, and our faith in HIS faithfulness is the key. It has to be trusting HIS righteousness and HIS faithfulness, as we shall clearly see.

***It really comes down to this: do we want the best that WE can do (OUR righteousness), or the best GOD can do, HIS righteousness and perfect goodness?***

I'm saying this over and over because I fear for many of my brothers and sisters in very conservative groups, or in the Hebrew Roots groups, or many in the Church of God groups – still focus on what WE do more than they focus on the relationship and gift we have from God, as I'll continue to show.

### RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE LAW

***Let me say early and often: I'm NOT saying we don't have to be obedient. I'm NOT saying we just have to claim Christ and then stay the way we are and we're OK. I'm NOT saying that. But neither is our salvation going to be because WE worked so hard at being good.***

I assure you I know what Jesus said in **Matthew 5:17-20** that heaven and earth would pass away before even one jot or tittle would pass from the Torah, or the law. AND YESHUA did say our righteousness **has to EXCEED that of the Pharisees**. So Paul, a Pharisee, can't possibly be speaking against keeping God's law, and certainly neither am I.

***Yeshua living in you and me will keep His law perfectly all over again*** – if we perfectly let Him. But our faith must be in HIS obedience and not in ours. Yeshua living in you and me will live the same way today that He lived before – obediently. And if I abide in Him, then I will walk as he walked. When I DON'T make Him my abode, that's when I can sin and sin horribly.

So back to the righteousness of the law: God's law, even the 10 commandments, does several things:

- God's law DEFINES SIN -- or unrighteousness (**1 John 3:4** – sin is the transgression of the law.") I would not have known sin – coveting – if it weren't for the law" – Rom. 7:7. "...by the law is the knowledge of sin" (**Romans 3:20b**). We are ALL SINNERS because aside from Christ, we have all broken the law.
- **God's law therefore --on the flip side, also defines righteousness** – (All thy commands are righteousness – **Ps. 119:172; Isa. 51:7**.  
**Psalm 119:172.**  
"My tongue shall speak of Your word, **For all Your commandments are righteousness.**"

**Isaiah 51:7:**

"Listen to Me, **you who know righteousness, You people in whose heart is My law....**

And because we all sinned, no one can be called "righteous" by God's standards, so that's why David and Paul say "there is NONE righteous, no not one."

- The LAW of God also defines who and what God IS – LOVE. God is love (**1 John 4:8, 16**). When we live lovingly towards God and man, we will be fulfilling the law

and its intent (**Romans 13:9-10**). The Law is love to Almighty God and to fellow humans.

So here's the deal: Keep all of Yehowah's law perfectly – and you'll be righteous and you'll be in the kingdom.

**Deuteronomy 6:24-25 and let's read it carefully:**

"And YHVH commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear YHVH our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as it is this day. 25 **Then it will be righteousness for us, IF we are careful to observe ALL these commandments** before YHVH our God, as He has commanded us.'

*So this is the same point Paul makes throughout the books of Romans and Galatians. As Moses says – "THEN it will be righteousness for us IF we are careful to observe it ALL!" IF we're going to be in God's kingdom on OUR righteousness, we have to have had a perfect keeping of the law. But even AFTER baptism and receiving the Holy Spirit, the truth is that we all still sin! Paul admitted in Romans 7 "that which I hate, I still do" – **Romans 7:14-20**. Please read that Passage if you're unfamiliar with it.*

We're ALL that way. Even *after* YHVH forgives our sins, even after we are immersed and receive God's spirit, face it – we still sin! We still fall short. And if I stumble in even just one of Father's laws, I'm guilty of breaking all.

**James 2:10-11**

"For **whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.** 11 For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law."

**Galatians 5:3** "And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law."

**And Paul is clear in Romans 7 that not even HE, an apostle, could keep the law perfectly.**

Now go back and read Romans 2. In there, Paul makes the point that if we keep the law perfectly, we could be declared righteous ("justified").

**Rom. 2:6-10** – will render to each one according to his deeds... either punishment or glory. Then pick up in verse 12:

**Romans 2:12-13**

12 For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law 13 (**for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified;**

***WE CAN be justified by obedience according to Rom 2:13, if we perfectly do it all, all the time... but wait....he goes on to explain, but NOBODY (except Jesus – or Yeshua) has been able to do it perfectly. Not you, not me, not anyone except Yeshua!*** SO we're all doomed, unless we accept our Savior. So everyone believes we need a Savior, but then many feel we either have no requirement to obey after accepting

Him – or they feel that after accepting Him it's all up to them to be “good enough” to “qualify” for the kingdom themselves. Both of those concepts are dead wrong.

### **Was Paul referring to the oral traditions (Oral Law) or to the written Law?**

Some teachers try to explain their righteousness by their own works by *incorrectly* teaching Paul was NOT referring to the *written* 10 commandments and the *written* Law but to the “oral law” and traditions of the Pharisees that they passed down to the elite rabbis over the years. *They teach that Paul was referring to what eventually got written down in what we know today as the Talmud and the Mishna. That is wrong!* I will talk about that much more in the next sermon.

But for now let me clearly show that in the very next verses, Paul clearly IS referring to the 10 commandments: *he mentions adultery and stealing in Rom 2, (Rom. 2:21-22)* and later he says he would not have known about *coveting* except “the law” mentions it (**Rom 7:7**) and he specifically mentions SEVERAL of the 10 commandments in **Rom 13:8-10!**

#### **Romans 13:8-10**

“Owe no one anything except to love one another, for **he who loves another has fulfilled the law.** 9 For the **commandments**, “You shall not commit **adultery**,” “You shall not **murder**,” “You shall not **steal**,” “You shall not bear **false witness**,” “You shall not **covet**,” and if there is any other **commandment**, **are all summed up in this saying, namely, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”** 10 Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore **love is the fulfillment of the law.**”

So we can't pick and choose when it's convenient to define “the law” as either the oral traditions on one hand, then in defining sin we say “the law” there in 1 John 3:4 means the 10 commandments. It's the 10 commandments! It's the written law. That's Paul's clearly stated context, and he says so!

**Also, in the book of Galatians, Paul even refers to “the things which are WRITTEN in the book of the law, to do them”... Gal. 3:10-13.** There was no written Talmud yet. He refers to Mt. Sinai, in other books he refers to Moses' shining face after he received the law. So Paul is clearly referring to the written law and not to “the oral law” because **Paul SAYS** he's referring to the actual commandments and to the written law.

You see those in Ditch 1 are afraid that if we admit Paul is referring to perfectly obeying the written law, that people will say they're done away with. NOT AT ALL. It's just that now we have FAITH in Christ living His life in us again, obediently. It's faith in HIM doing it rather than faith in our ability to do it, as we'll continue to show. IF we exercise that faith, we will indeed experience living in His righteousness. That's the fight: to exercise faith! To actually follow His leading, his urging, His mind in us – by faith. We can do all things through Christ! But that is by faith. It starts by faith and ends by faith (Romans 1:17).

If we really understood this, we would be glorifying Yeshua and loving Him more each day!

There's no conflict. Paul just explains that if you want to be declared righteous by your own obedience, we have to perfectly, 100% of the time, keep every single commandment perfectly – or we won't be there. Instead we would come under the curse of the law, which is death. Paul is writing to Judaizers who were teaching that we become righteous by works

of the law. Remember that in Judaism – especially after the 2<sup>nd</sup> temple was destroyed and there can be no more sacrifices or even a working priesthood – there is the prevailing belief that in the judgment, each person is judged on whether they did mostly good or mostly bad in their lives. That's a diabolical lie! Even with just one sin – and we need a Savior. And we have One in Yeshua.

*We will be judged either guilty or not-guilty, even righteous – by our interaction with Yeshua, not on whether we are mostly good or mostly bad. Let's read a bit more.*

**Galatians 2:16**

16 knowing **that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ**, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

We believe in Christ, so it is faith IN Him, but it is also the faith "OF Christ" as KJV puts it. Then he explains in **verses 17-19** that neither does that mean that we go back to a life of sin!

**Galatians 2:20-21 [we often read v 20, but what about verse 21?]**

20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. 21 **I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.**"

So Paul teaches full well in many scriptures that we must put off lying, stealing, adultery, and teaches NO one who practices sin will be in the kingdom (1 Cor. 6:9). But he also teaches that in the end, our own efforts will fall short and therefore we need to express, ask for and believe in the righteousness of Yeshua (Jesus Christ) gifted to us. We'll read that shortly.

**Paul goes to great lengths to demonstrate these concepts with verses like these:**

- Since everyone has sinned, we're all under the death penalty (**Rom 3:23; 6:23**)
- Even after receiving the Spirit, we still fall short (**Rom 7:14-20**) and still sin.
- But after repenting and turning around, we make every effort to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit and to let God live a righteous life in us (**Romans 6:15-19**).
- We become debtors to God to show our appreciation by becoming slaves of righteousness (**Romans 8:13-16**). Only those led by His Spirit are His children.
- **Remember, even when it comes to faith, we PROVE our faith by action (James 2:14-26).** The greatest proof of someone being saved by Christ is a changing life! A thief now works to share what he has (Ephesians 4:25-32) Liars now speak truth. Gossips now speak kind words seasoned with grace.

**WHAT OUR MAIN TASK IS NOW**

Yeshua said:

**John 15:4-6**

4 ***Abide in Me, and I in you.*** As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, ***neither can you, unless you abide in Me.***

5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. ***He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.***

I believe this is hard work we are to focus on! Yeshua represents the holy vine or tree. If the main tree (or "lump") is holy, then so are the branches, Paul says ***in Romans 11:16-17***. Please turn and read it. So as long as I make my home in Christ, and He in Me, and as long as I fight sin by the power of His Spirit, as long as I really let Yeshua be the Master of my life – then HIS righteousness, HIS fruit, HIS goodness will be imputed to me, as we shall see. But I must appreciate what He is doing, let Him into my life, and let him LIVE again in me.

### **IF Christ LIVES in US – we WILL WALK AS HE WALKED**

Christ will live obediently in us, if we truly let Him be Lord and master of our lives! It will be Him doing it; not me! He will live in us the way He lived the first time – obediently!

#### **1 John 2:3-6**

3 Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. 6 ***He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.***

So what's the answer? We read it earlier already, but let's read it again:

#### **Philippians 3:8-11**

...That I may gain Christ...9 ***and be found IN HIM, NOT having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through the faithfulness of Christ, [it's HIS righteousness, and faith in HIS faithfulness] the righteousness which is from God by faith;*** 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

### ***Father is offering us something we rarely discuss: The great exchange.***

When we sin, we are guilty and have incurred the death penalty (Romans 6:23). We know that. GOD is the one who calls us and makes us aware of that (John 6:44-46). God is the one who brings us to repentance (Romans 2:4). God starts and ends everything via faith (Romans 1:17).

We also all know that when we repent, Christ puts on Himself all our sins, and bears the penalty for us all, by dying for us. Nothing new there for you perhaps, but it's huge!

The problem with that is that it's like we had this massive sin debt that bankrupted us. He forgives us our debt and pays it for us. So now upon repentance we no longer owe the death penalty.

But is that enough? Is it enough to just have our DEBT cancelled/removed?

***Just like a financial debt, we are now at zero balance in our "righteousness bank" once we're forgiven. We're still bankrupt! So something very profound happens.***

**2 Corinthians 5:17-21**

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. 18 Now ALL things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, **not imputing their trespasses to them**, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

**21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that WE might become the righteousness OF GOD IN HIM (IN Christ).**

Read verse 21 again. Slowly. That “WE might become the righteousness of God”. How? By being in Christ. By being part of Him, part of His body, and HE lives again in us. That should be so exciting to us if we’re grasping it.

So already, we’ve read that Paul says in Philippians 3:9-11 that he does not want His own righteousness, but God’s. Now here he says we can have the righteousness of GOD by being in Christ. We are part of His perfect body, and “in Christ”, we are covered by His righteousness. This should thrill us!

Don’t panic yet, you in Ditch 1.... I’m not teaching that we don’t have to obey. I’m just repeating what scripture says. And if Christ is in us, and we in Him, *Christ will live once more in us He did before—perfectly and obediently* --if we let that happen. If we **let** His mind be in us (Philippians 2:5); if we follow Him example, if we beg Him to help us fight temptation and sin. if we submit to Him as the Lord of our lives that He must be! Most of the time, our spirit is willing but our flesh is weak - -and so we still sin, as Paul admits in Romans 7:15 (“that which I hate, I do”).

So we have to learn about the righteousness of God that is *offered* to us, that Paul so often speaks of. We must come to understand and believe it, and ask for it, and trust in it. Notice in Romans 3:21-29 how many times Paul speaks of “HIS righteousness”, meaning God’s.

**Romans 3:21-29**

**21 But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed**, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even **the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe**. For there is no difference;

23 for ALL have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, **to demonstrate HIS righteousness**, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, 26 **to demonstrate at the present time HIS righteousness**, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. 28 ***Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.***

[Of course I know that faith is demonstrated and proven by what we do. Again, if Christ is living in us, we will live a life that demonstrates that. But it is Christ's doing, not mine.]

Then in **Romans** 4:1-6 he speaks of Abraham believing God and how that faith, that belief, was accounted or imputed or credited to him as **righteousness** (verse 3). That comes straight from **Genesis 15:6** by the way.

**Romans 5:1-2** – he tells us WE have the same access to that same righteousness by believing just like our father Abraham believed. "...we have access *by faith* into this grace by which we stand..."

### **THE RARELY DISCUSSED GIFT OF GOD**

Then, later in Romans 5, Paul tells us about a GIFT of God that we rarely speak of. If we were discussing "gifts of God", we would often speak of the gift of the Holy Spirit, the gift of love, the gift of tongues, the gift of forgiveness, the gift of His Son, the gift of wisdom and on and on. How often have you heard of this gift we'll read about now?

#### **Romans 5:12-19 THE GIFT RARELY SPOKEN OF....**

12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned — 13 (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. 15 **But the free gift** is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. 16 And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, **but the free gift** which came from many offenses resulted in justification. 17 For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of **the GIFT of righteousness** will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)

18 Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so **through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.** 19 **For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.**

But again, we receive the gift and then prove we have it by a changing life: the new life of the living, resurrected Messiah in us as He explains in **Romans 6:1-3, 11-19**. And this is how we also witness to HIS resurrection, that He is alive, because the change in our lives should become so profound that there's no other way to explain it! It must be the risen Christ living in us, and our lives witness to His resurrection.

Our best witness to the living/alive Son of God is not due to our preaching. It's not what we say. It's the witness that He is changing us by living in us. Our lives are changing. **Our new lives preach a better sermon than words, to the resurrection of our Savior.**

*If – after receiving the Spirit – we go back to a life of sin as a way of life, it's like a washed sow (pig) going back to the wallow and mire (**2 Peter 2:22**). It must not be so!*

*So, we must seek the righteousness of God Himself to be part of His kingdom. That righteousness, HIS righteousness, is God's GIFT to us. He knows we'll never do it on our own, even with His Spirit (Romans 7:14-20), so **if we believe in faith and accept HIS righteousness as His gift, it IS imputed to us also**. But if we don't let Him change us, if we don't change, if we don't turn around and turn to YHVH – then He can't be living in us! We **MUST** obey. We must demonstrate His goodness now.*

### **IMPUTED, OR CREDITED, RIGHTEOUSNESS to those who believe**

We are to have faith that we are being credited *with God's righteousness* itself – and then show profound appreciation for that by growing to become more and more like God. It's a process.

#### **Romans 4:11**

"Righteousness was *imputed* (credited) to Abraham because he *believed* – even before he was circumcised". ["Imputed" means credited to; treated as if something is now yours.]

But it was not imputed just to Abraham, but to all who are believers like Abraham!

#### **Romans 4:22-24**

22 And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness."

23 Now it (righteousness) was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, 24 **but also for us. It (righteousness) shall be imputed to US who believe in Him** who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead,

Hallelujah! This is also what Paul was getting at in Philippians 3:9-11. I realize "Imputed righteousness" was a big teaching of Martin Luther, but I'd rather say that it's a teaching of Paul, when we correctly understand it. Martin Luther taught against the commandments at times. I'm not! I disagree with much of Luther's teachings, but I have to agree with a teaching if it is from the Bible. Here in **Romans 4 and 5**, and **Philippians 3:9-11**, and **1 Corinthians 1:30-31; 2 Corinthians 5:20-21** – the gift of imputed righteousness through faith in Yeshua is clearly taught.

**What an awesome gift!** We give Father our sin debt and our empty lives – and He gives us HIS righteousness, HIS Son, His glory, His kingdom. Hallelujah! What a swap! What a bargain! What a big deal! No wonder He gets upset when we scorn His calling and don't accept the invitation to the wedding supper (**Matthew 22:1-10**).

My brothers and sisters, do YOU understand this? Do you *believe* not just in the crucifixion and His forgiveness – but in the *gift of His righteousness*? Without it, as I said earlier, we're still bankrupt spiritually even with our past sins forgiven. NOW we have all the promises of God, all that God is – imputed to us, His children, by faith.

#### **Romans 8:2-5**

2 For the law of the Spirit of ***life in Christ Jesus*** has made me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, 4 ***that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*** [yes, we DO have to have a new, obedient walk now – as we follow the Spirit.]

All this is by faith in Him... it is *His life, His* righteousness saving us day by day.....

It is a process, “Until Christ is formed in you” (Gal. 4:19). HE must increase, and we must decrease ( similar to what John the baptizer said in John 3:30).

Let's not make the same mistake the Jews made in Paul's day:

**Romans 9:30-10:4**

30 What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even ***the righteousness of faith***; 31 ***but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.*** 32 ***Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law...***

**Romans 10:1-4**

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. 2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

3 For ***they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.*** 4 For Christ is the end [purpose] of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

I hope that is SO clear now.

It's HIS righteousness being lived in us. HE will complete it also! Change takes time. But He has promised to finish what He's started in us.

**Philippians 1:6-7**

“being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it [when?---] ***until the day of Jesus Christ***;

**Philippians 1:9-11**

9 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, 10 that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, 11 ***being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ***, to the glory and praise of God.

**Philippians 2:12 – and don't forget verse 13.**

12 Work out your own salvation... 13 -- ***for it is GOD who works in you*** both to will (want to do) and to do according to His good pleasure...”

We are HIS workmanship (we are not our own workmanship) created in Christ Jesus... (Ephesians 2:10). HE is the creator of HIS new creation. **I don't believe in spiritual**

**evolution** – that given enough time I can finally “make it” and “qualify” for the kingdom by all my hard work. My hard work is to stay latched on to Christ, to ABIDE in Him. That’s my hard work. IF I do that, HE will live obediently in me. HE will obey in my life; produce the fruit in me – but it will be HIS righteousness as we just read. My hard work is to fight the flesh and follow the lead of His spirit. My hard work is to pray for more faith, to exercise that faith in HIM and in HIS goodness.

Father is the One perfecting us, qualifying us for the Kingdom. HE is the one making us fit, or KJV “meet” for the kingdom (Col. 1:12. Read it, it’s powerful!) The ONLY one worthy in the end, is the Lamb. Remember Rev. 5:1-10? Worthy is THE LAMB, Yeshua! WE are worthy only to the extent HE is in US and we are in HIM as part of HIS body. I hope that’s making sense.

**Colossians 1:12 (you might miss the meaning in KJV)**

12 giving **thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.** 13 *HE has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,* 14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

Verse 12 in KJV is not as clear: “who has made us meet [qualified] to be partakers...” Other translations say “made us fit to be partakers”; “Who has enabled you to share ....”

### When Perfection comes

***SO WHEN will WE be perfect and cast off the flesh, cast off the corruption, the weakness of flesh?***

Yeshua is already perfect, but OUR perfection is finalized at the resurrection. That’s when we won’t sin any longer. We’ll be born into the family of GOD, as true children of GOD, and those born of God cannot sin (1 John 3:9).

### **1 Corinthians 15:50-58**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; **nor does corruption inherit incorruption.** 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but **we shall all be changed** — [this is more than just the make-up of our composition]

52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the **dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.**

53 *For this corruptible must put on incorruption,* and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, THEN shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.”

55 “O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?”

56 The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.

**57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Now read this next passage with new eyes. We're not just going to be angels, we're going to be like Him. Many verses say the righteous will shine like the stars when we are glorified (**Daniel 12:3; Matthew 13:43**).

**1 John 3:2-3**

2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that ***when He is revealed, we shall be like Him***, for we shall see Him as He is. 3 *And everyone who has THIS hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*

Remember we are being changed by YHVH into the image of our Savior (Rom 8:29). "Image" is about *being* LIKE Him. "Likeness" is about looking like Him. HE is the one working in us doing all this. We do have to obey by following His lead, letting HIS mind lead us.

**Jude 24**

24 ***Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless*** before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, 25 ***To God our Savior***, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, both now and forever.

**Brethren, this is the same faith David had**, Noah had, Abraham had, Sarah had, Esther had, Deborah had, Mary, Elizabeth, Mary and Martha had and all the prophets had ....and WE must have.

**Hebrews 11:7** says about Noah ... "became heir of the faith that is according to FAITH." *THAT is the righteousness that Scripture describes as the only righteousness "good enough" for the kingdom: GOD'S very own righteousness, which we can have by faith as His gift to us.* Do we want our best effort – or God's best effort?

**Psalms 31:1**

**In You, YHVH, I put my trust;** Let ME never be ashamed;  
Deliver me in **Your righteousness.** (also **PS. 145:7**)

**Psalms 7:17**

I will praise the Lord according to **His righteousness...**

The result of all this should be a profound joy and love for God.

***The result of all this is: YESHUA – Jesus Christ – still walks the earth, in you and me. It's about him. We long to know Him and the power of living by HIS resurrection!***

I accept His gift. HE is the one who qualifies me when I have faith in Christ, and ask for the faithfulness of Yeshua my Messiah to cover me. Amen and amen.

If this has been helpful to you, spread the word. Tell others of this website. And please give me feedback too. I enjoy hearing from those I'm serving around the world with these teachings. Your encouragement helps to encourage me to keep doing these teachings. Thank you, and may YHVH bless you and guard you and may His face shine upon you and bring you peace. May He put HIS name – YHVH – upon you.