

Live on the Gospel Day by Day

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Question: "What does it mean by 'a righteousness of God, revealed from faith to faith?' What does that mean?"

Discussion:

Tim: "The righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written the just shall live by faith." In other words- this is key- from "faith to faith" means, contrary to what many are saying today, you must continue believing in acceptance with God based on a righteousness not your own, You must believe this gospel. You must believe in this righteousness of God, not just once.

A lot of people have this idea, "Oh, I believe! I believed. I did that. I believed in Christ. I took care of that." But that's not what the Scripture says. The Scripture says we live on this gospel from day to day. In other words, if you've already been saved on this gospel, you need to live today and tomorrow on it as well. You know one of the problems we have been having with these people that have all of a sudden been doubting their salvation, wondering whether they are in, whether they are out? It's because they are not feeding on this truth day by day. As much as it is a reality that regeneration produces a transformed life (and it is) and we need to emphasize those texts, because there needs to be transformation.

But I'll tell you this, if the person who has trusted in Christ suddenly gets bogged back down by the law and by their performance, they are suddenly going to find themselves in all sorts of trouble. We have to live on the gospel day by day. You can go to the book of 1 John and you can look at all that it says about the realities of true Christianity, and a myriad of other places. You can go to Romans 6-8, you can go to Matthew 7, you can look at all these characteristics over and over and over again that are set forth as to what true Christianity is.

But I'll tell you this, as you go and look at them, you need to not be drifting away from the cross. We need to feed on the reality of an imputed righteousness from faith to faith. You need to live on it today, and tomorrow. That's why we need to go back to the cross again and again, to the life of Christ, to the perfect righteousness earned by Christ. Isn't that why Paul says even right there in the midst of describing the whole Christian life, "There is therefore now no condemnation..." Even as Paul is describing the Christian life, he comes back to that again: "No condemnation", "who can bring a charge against God's elect!"

Brethren, we got to back there again and again. It is God who justifies. He declares us righteous. Brethren, that is so liberating. When you have a day where you have fallen flat on your face; if you run to 1 John, I mean if you run to like 1 John 3:9-10, you run there and you are looking there about practicing righteousness; brethren you need to run to 1 John 2:1, "We have an Advocate with the Father."

We need to come back to that reality; that even in my worst day, I am accepted on the merits of Christ. It's the righteousness of God that's been imputed to me when I was ungodly. And even if I have some demonstration of ungodliness as a Christian, I am still accepted based on the merits of Christ, not based on mine.

And so, brethren, that is so liberating. That is so liberating! That means, oh, I can strive to be like Christ, I can strive to live holy, but when I fall on my face it doesn't mean I lose my salvation! It doesn't mean I'm in one day and out the next day. It means I go back to the cross and I find in that new food for spiritual life and assurance and certainty. Brethren, if we depart from that, if we move away from it, we lose our strength as a Christian. Because here's where the joy is derived in the Christian life, the joy comes from the cross. It really does. You try to live on your performance, brethren, it tends to be a pretty hollow thing.

But you live on the merits of Jesus Christ, even in your worst day you can rejoice that your acceptance is based on Christ and rather than crawling into a corner with all the temptations of the devil coming upon you: "Look at you, look at the mess you made. You think Christ wants anything to do with that bundle of fallenness over there?" You can with joy go right back into the race, right back into the work, right back into living for God realizing, "I am accepted on the merits of Christ." The cross speaks in my behalf. That's why it talks about an Advocate. There is One pleading our case there, even on our worst day. Who is going to bring a charge against us? Brethren, we know people do bring charges and the devil does bring charges. When it says, "Who can bring a charge?" It doesn't mean that there is nobody doing it. What it means is that there is nothing that can stick.

Look, if Christ once pays for all your sin - away with this Catholic mentality that only my past sins have been forgiven! Now I've somehow got to get the future ones paid as I'm committing them, that's garbage! That's Catholic heresy! Christ atones on that cross. He said "It's finished!" It means all my sin once and forever, I am justified. That means I am declared righteous. I am an ungodly person declared righteous, not based on my performance. I am declared righteous, and the reality is, on my worst day, I am still declared righteous. And even though people and devils do bring accusation and charge, what's meant there in Romans 8, "nobody can bring a charge against me", is that nobody can bring a charge against me that is going to stand with the Judge, not when I have an Intercessor that sits at the right hand of God.