

FULFILLING ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS

Introduction

- 1) **Matthew 3:15** – Jesus told John to baptize Him because they must “*fulfill all righteousness*”
- 2) Jesus meant that they must do what is right and just – they must obey the will and plan of God
 - a) Gk. *dikaiosune* – judicial approval; what is deemed right by the Lord, approved in His eyes
 - b) Why? Not for remission of sin (cf. Mk. 1:4); endorse baptism? give example? begin work?
- 3) Jesus is our perfect example; His entire life on earth was all about fulfilling righteousness
 - a) From His youth (Lk. 2:49), through His life (Jn. 4:34), to His death (Jn. 19:28-30)
 - b) Sadly, no other person has lived perfectly so as to be “righteous” before God (Rom. 3:10, 23)
- 4) How is possible that we can live “righteously” today in the sight of God (Titus 2:12)?

I) RIGHTEOUSNESS

- A) God leads us in “paths of righteousness” (Psa. 23:3) – How?
 - 1) God is righteous (Psa. 119:137; Rev. 16:5)
 - 2) God’s commandments are righteousness (Psa. 119:138, 172)
- B) We are to believe and follow the righteous ways of our righteous God (2 Pet. 2:5)

II) JESUS CHRIST, THE RIGHTEOUS

- A) God’s righteousness was prophesied to come (Isa. 56:1; 62:1-2)
- B) Jesus Christ is described as “the righteous” (1 Jn. 2:1; Isa. 53:11 “My righteous servant”)
 - 1) Those who are born of Him will practice righteousness (1 Jn. 2:29)
 - 2) The righteousness of God is revealed today in the gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16-17)

III) PRACTICING RIGHTEOUSNESS

- A) God expects man to live righteously (Acts 24:25; Titus 2:12)
- B) Righteousness is *not* an abstract concept, but true guidance for spiritual living (Matt. 5:6)
 - 1) Righteousness is something worked – action of mind and body (Acts 10:35)
- C) We are to practice righteousness instead of lawlessness [sin] (1 Jn. 3:4-10; 2 Pet. 2:7-8)
 - 1) Practicing righteousness = doing the will of the Father (cf. Matt. 7:21)
- D) We will be righteous like Jesus if we practice the righteousness of God (1 Jn. 3:7)
 - 1) *Not* Christ’s righteousness imputed to our account (this is Calvinistic error)
 - 2) Abel and Abraham were righteous due to their faith and obedience (Heb. 11:4; Jas. 2:23)
 - 3) Only by the grace of God can we be forgiven of sin and faithfully obey His will in order to be declared righteous by God

IV) LIVING RIGHTEOUSLY

- A) Righteous living is the opposite of living for ungodliness and worldly lusts (Titus 2:12)
- B) Can we live righteously while...
 - 1) Gambling? Dressing immodestly? Cursing? Drinking alcohol? Taking drugs? Engaging in sexual immorality? Holding grudges? Refusing to forgive and reconcile? Believing false doctrine? Supporting teachers of error? (unrighteousness – 1 Cor. 6:9-10)
- C) We need to be able to discern between the righteous and the wicked (Mal. 3:18)

Conclusion

There is a **righteous Judge** (2 Tim. 4:8) who will judge the world in **righteousness** (Acts 17:31) at the last day. The unrighteous person should seek the Lord, call upon Him, forsake his wicked ways and thoughts, and return to the Lord (Isa. 55:6-7). Are you willing and ready to live righteously for God in this present sinful world?