

The Righteousness of God

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The Psalmist declares of God, “Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne” (Ps. 89:14; 97:2). The Scriptures reveal the eternal truth that God is righteous (Rom. 1:16-17). Righteousness is defined as “the character or quality of being right or just” (Vine, II, p. 980). God perfectly bears this quality, displaying His righteousness before all. Notice some different aspects of His righteousness and how God’s character directly impacts us.

1) **The righteousness of God refers to His holiness.** God is holy and pure, completely free from the taint of error or sin. God possesses absolutely no impurity, contamination or corruption. With God there is no weakness or frailty of character. He is transcendent in His holiness, deserving our highest praise (Psa. 148:13; 150:2). Whereas we falter and fail, God does not. God’s holiness was fully represented when Jesus left the throne of heaven to become like a man (Heb. 1:3). He was tempted as we are, but He was sinless (Heb. 4:15). When we consider the holiness of God, and the perfect example of Jesus Christ, we should also strive to be holy (1 Thess. 4:7; 1 Pet. 1:14-16; 1 Jn. 3:3).

2) **The righteousness of God refers to His faithfulness.** He is loyal and true, and He will not forsake His word (Psa. 33:4). His faithfulness is great and undeterred (Jer. 3:23; 2 Tim. 2:13). Due to God’s faithfulness, we can trust God and put full assurance in His word. In fact, God’s faithfulness is the basis of our faith. Faith consists of believing that God is, and that He is a rewarder of those that diligently seek Him (Heb. 11:6). Faith means believing that God is faithful to His promises. If we believe the promises of God, we will live

in full obedience to Him. It is only when we forget about God and His promises that we slip into worldliness and sin.

3) **The righteousness of God refers to His justice.** This quality of God can clearly be seen in His judgment and dealings with mankind. For man, sin bears the penalty of death. By God’s grace, salvation has been freely offered to mankind. The *manner* in which God offers salvation displays His righteousness. God did not simply overlook sin. He did not ignore it. He did not disregard it. His justice demanded that the price be paid, so He sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice to bear the penalty of sin for us (Jn. 3:16; Gal. 4:4-5). Moreover, there is no partiality with God (Rom. 2:11). He freely offers salvation to everyone who believes (Titus 2:11; Acts 10:34; Rom. 3:21-22). Salvation is not restricted by gender, race or social standing (Gal. 3:28). Rather, the conditions of salvation are attainable for all who desire to be saved.

The righteous of God proclaims His character as holy, faithful and just. When we consider who God is, we can more fully know who we should be. We can never be perfect like our heavenly Father, but we can be deemed righteous because of the sacrifice of Jesus. Jesus died on the cross that we might be presented before God holy and blameless (Col. 1:22; Rom. 6:12-13). Christ’s sacrifice enables us to become the righteousness of God, bearing the status of our redeemed condition (2 Cor. 5:21; Psa. 24:5). God’s right character offers us righteousness.

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