

In this study we used the terms *righteousness* and *justification* used almost interchangeably. But what are the differences between them and how does this affect us?

Let us now look at the six questions about righteousness:

1. What is Righteousness in General?
2. How Manifold is Righteousness or Justice?
3. In What Does Righteousness Differ From Justification?
4. What is Our Righteousness before God?
5. How Does the Satisfaction of Christ become our Righteousness, seeing that it is without us?
6. Why is the Satisfaction of Christ Made Ours, or Why Does God Impute it Unto Us For Righteousness?

We may legitimately ask 'How are we righteous before God?'

Scripture teaches us that we can only be righteous before God by a true faith in Jesus Christ.

Rom 3:21 – 28 But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, <sup>22</sup>even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; <sup>23</sup>for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup>being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; <sup>25</sup>whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; <sup>26</sup>for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. <sup>27</sup>Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith. <sup>28</sup>For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.

Gal 2:15, 16 We are Jews by nature and not sinners from among the Gentiles; <sup>16</sup>nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may

be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.

Eph 2:8 – 9 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; <sup>9</sup>not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Even though my conscience accuses me of having grievously sinned against all God's commandments and of never having kept any of them,

Rom 3:9 - 12 What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; <sup>10</sup>as it is written, "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; <sup>11</sup>THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; <sup>12</sup>ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE."

and even though I am still inclined toward all evil,

Rom 7:23 ... I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.

nevertheless, without my deserving it at all,

Tit 3:4 – 5 But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, <sup>5</sup>He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.

out of sheer grace,

Rom 3:24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

Eph 2:8, 9 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; <sup>9</sup>not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

God grants and credits to me the perfect satisfaction, righteousness and holiness of Christ

Rom 4:3-15 For what does the Scripture say? "ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS." <sup>4</sup>Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. <sup>5</sup>But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness, <sup>6</sup>just as David also speaks of the blessing on the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: <sup>7</sup>"BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOSE LAWLESS DEEDS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, AND WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED. <sup>8</sup>"BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE SIN THE LORD WILL NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT." <sup>9</sup>Is this blessing then on the circumcised, or on the uncircumcised also? For we say, "FAITH WAS CREDITED TO ABRAHAM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS." <sup>10</sup>How then was it credited? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised; <sup>11</sup>and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited to them, <sup>12</sup>and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised. <sup>13</sup>For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith. <sup>14</sup>For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified; <sup>15</sup>for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no violation.

2Cor 5:17 - 19 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. <sup>18</sup>Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, <sup>19</sup>namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

1John 2:1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate

with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; <sup>2</sup>and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

as if I had never sinned nor been a sinner, as if I had been as perfectly obedient as Christ was obedient for me.

Rom 4:23 - 25 Now not for his sake only was it written that it was credited to him, <sup>24</sup>but for our sake also, to whom it will be credited, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, <sup>25</sup>He who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification.

2Co 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

All I need to do is to embrace the gift of God with a believing heart,

Hab 2:4 "Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him; But the righteous will live by his faith.

Acts 16:30 - 31 and after he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" <sup>31</sup>They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."

Joh 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Joh 3:36 "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

Joh 6:40, 47 For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day. <sup>47</sup>Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life.

Joh 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, <sup>26</sup>and

everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

Producing good works as gratitude for our salvation and as proof that we have been made righteous before God.

1John 3:17 But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? <sup>18</sup>Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

The doctrine of justification is a fundamental premise of our faith and is also most frequently called in question by our opponents.

The controversy in this matter has in principle to do with two points, namely, concerning God, and concerning the justification of man in the sight of God. These doctrines are of such importance that if one is overthrown, the other cannot remain. Hence, it is necessary for us to fortify and establish ourselves, especially in these doctrines, against all the assaults of our enemies and our own uncertainties.

### 1. What is righteousness in general?

Righteousness has a legal character and is an aspect of the law specifically conformity with the law. Contrary to righteousness is sin or unrighteousness which is the transgression of the law. A definition agreeing with both God's law and secular law is hardly possible although the principal of righteousness remains the same. Abraham and Job were considered righteous in terms of the law and their conduct in respect to that. They were not considered righteous in respect to their salvation.

Righteousness before God is conformity with God and the divine law.

Righteousness can be found in several categories of which two are, uncreated and created righteousness, which we will deal with in more detail shortly.

Uncreated righteousness is God himself, the foundation and rule, or pattern, of all righteousness, also called divine righteousness. Created righteousness is an effect of and flows from uncreated or divine righteousness to rational creatures.

Righteousness, therefore, in general, as far as it has respect to creatures, consists in fulfilling those laws that pertain to rational creatures. It is conformity on the part of rational creatures with those laws, which have respect to them. Righteousness is the fulfillment of the law, and conformity with the law is righteousness itself.

This must be observed and held fast to, because only by fulfilling the law can our justification be effected. Evangelical righteousness is the fulfilling of the law, and does not conflict with the law in the least. The gospel does not abolish the law, but establishes it.

Next week we will deal with the manifold character of righteousness.