

God's Righteousness In Romans – Part 8

Wayde Miller

A new life in Christ. A new life of faith. A new life having risen from the grave of baptism where the life of sin was laid to rest. In concluding this series on how Paul presented the righteousness of God in Romans, we have seen that God's righteousness found a way for us to be righteous before Him. We have gone from God's wrath to His children because of the gift of Jesus and His sacrifice and our faith in Him. A faith that responds in obedience.

Our union with Jesus Christ at the time of our conversion requires that sin be rejected and renounced and that righteousness be served. Our lives should reflect a "deadness to sin" and an "aliveness to righteousness." A decision is called for by Paul, a decision to cease presenting our bodies as instruments for accomplishing sin and to present our bodies to God as instruments of righteousness. We are the slaves of that to which we give ourselves. We will either become slaves of righteousness or slaves of sin. Paul urges us to become slaves of righteousness.

Listen to Paul, "Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness." (Rom. 6:16-18.)

There is a problem, however, which Paul describes in chapter 7. Positionally speaking, our death to sin in Christ freed us from the bondage of the Law, so that we may serve God by the prompting of the Spirit, rather than by the demands of the Law. But our positional change leads to some very practical problems. Now, in Christ, we have the desire to do what is right but sin still gets the best of us. We do what we hate (sin), and we don't do what we love (righteousness). The Law is not the problem, for we agree with what the Law requires and forbids. The problem is with our flesh, which cannot overcome the greater power of sin. The righteousness for which we were saved, and which we are obligated to perform, we are unable to achieve by ourselves.

Man's inability has a divine solution, expounded by Paul in chapter 8. God has provided His children with the power of the Holy Spirit. Those who walk in the Spirit are able to overcome the power of sin and to practice that righteousness which God requires through the Law (see Romans 8:4). This same Spirit, who now indwells and empowers every Christian, is the Spirit who raised the dead body of Jesus Christ to life. He can and will raise our "dead" bodies to life as well, not only in the physical sense, but in giving us the ability to live righteously. Just as Abraham and Sarah were "dead" so far as producing a child, but were "made alive" to do so (Romans 4:19), so we who are "dead" with respect to living righteously are "made alive" to do so by His Spirit.

And because God is for us and gave His Son to die, there is not anything we can't overcome. All the trials and temptations we face in this life can not only be overcome, they can be obliterated in the life of a Christian. Nothing can keep a saint from heaven. God's gift of redemption is our proof of that. So, go with God all the way to heaven.