

## ~ 1 John ~

## Lesson 23- He is Righteous

We are continuing our study of 1 John and we are in the section spanning verses **2:28 – 3:3**. John's focus in this letter is our Fellowship with God, abiding in Him and allowing His Word and His Spirit to abide in us. And if we will allow His Word to renew our minds to His Truth, it will change the way we live this life. That's what Christianity is. It's a change of heart, a change of mind. It is being rescued out of the kingdom of darkness and transformed into the kingdom of His dear Son. It is being born again, born from above with a new citizenship from Heaven. We as Christians are born from God, we are children of God. We who believe in Jesus have been given the greatest gift. The gift of eternal life through His Son, and all who receive this love gift, receive the gift of being made perfect in Righteousness. This is something no one can earn. It is the gift of grace received through faith in Jesus that results in our Justification, our being declared Righteous by the Righteous One Himself.

Today we will be looking at verse 29 so lets read this again...

<p><sup>29</sup> If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.</p>	<p><sup>29</sup> ἐὰν εἰδῆτε ὅτι δίκαιός ἐστι, γινώσκετε ὅτι πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν δικαιοσύνην, ἐξ αὐτοῦ γεγέννηται.</p>
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Verse 29 tells us two things concerning Righteousness. 1) that God is Righteous... and 2) everyone who practice Righteousness has the evidence of being born of God. Therefore, to truly understand this verse, we need to first understand what Righteousness is.

Righteousness is the Greek word, dikaiosune, *δικαιοσύνη*. In its simplest form it means justice. It comes from the root word, dike, *δίκη*, meaning judicial punishment. God, who is Righteous, judges with Justice. He deals in right judgement.

Psalm 9:4- *For You have maintained my right and my cause; You sat on the throne judging in righteousness.*

Psalm 9:8- *He shall judge the world in righteousness, And He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness.*

Psalm 96:13- *For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with His truth.*

Psalm 119:160- *The entirety of Your word is truth, And every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever.*

Jeremiah 23:5- *“Behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.*

God is Holy and He is Righteous. He is the Righteous Judge, and He cannot tolerate sin. Therefore, He Righteously and Justly judges sinners and punishes those who are guilty of sin with divine wrath.

Isaiah 11:4- *But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, And decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.*

Romans 3:5-6- <sup>5</sup> *But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unjust who inflicts wrath? (I speak as a man.)* <sup>6</sup> *Certainly not! For then how will God judge the world?*

God will judge Righteously, and God's Righteous Judgement on unrighteousness will result in Divine Wrath.

Romans 1:18- *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,*

Romans 2:5- *But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,*

Acts 17:31- *...He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.*

Jesus will be the Man judging in Righteousness and this Day is the Day of the Lord- we also know this as the Tribulation.

Psalm 21:8-9-<sup>8</sup> *Your hand will find all Your enemies; Your right hand will find those who hate You. <sup>9</sup> You shall make them as a fiery oven in the time of Your anger; The LORD shall swallow them up in His wrath, And the fire shall devour them.*

Revelation 19:1-2-<sup>1</sup> *After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! <sup>2</sup> For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her."*

Revelation 19:11- *Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.*

Righteousness cannot tolerate sin and there are many Scriptures detailing the Righteous wrath to come. The Bible is very clear that Jesus, the Righteous One, will be judging in Righteousness and all unrighteousness will be punished. God is Holy, Righteous and Good, and He cannot tolerate anything less than perfection, and God's Law is the standard of His Righteousness. Romans 7:12- *Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.* His Law is perfection and is a representation of God's perfect character. God's Law was given to establish the standard of His Righteousness. The Law was never meant to make one Righteous, but rather to make sin evident and show us the need of a Savior by condemning all under sin, Romans 3:19, 23- <sup>19</sup> *Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God...* The Law stops all boasting and condemns all under sin. Why are all condemned? Verse <sup>23</sup> *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*

Romans 5:12- *Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—*

The purpose of the Law was not meant to save anybody, but to condemn everybody. The Law is Righteous, and the Righteousness of the Law does not justify, but instead it condemns by exposing sin. And it condemns everybody because all have sinned.

Romans 3:20- *Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin...*

Justification, "to be justified" is the word, dikaiō, δικαιώ, it is a verb derived from the word Righteousness, dikaiosune, δικαιοσύνη. Justification, dikaiō, δικαιώ, means to make or render as just. To be declared Righteous. To hold as guiltless, to be cleared from Righteous punishment, to be judged right by means of judicial sentence, to be in right standing with God.

The Bible is very clear that all have sinned, and no one can make themselves Righteous, no one can be justified through their own effort.

Romans 3:9-12-<sup>9</sup> *What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin. <sup>10</sup> As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; " There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. <sup>12</sup> They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one."*

No one is Righteous through their own merits, and no one can justify themselves by their own works, no one can be good enough, no one can uphold the Righteous demands of the Law resulting in earning their own Right standing before God.

God is Righteous and His Righteousness is so far beyond the reach of anyone, it is impossible that any person could even come close to achieving a Right standing before God with their own merits. Justification cannot come from any human form of righteousness. Human merit trying to achieve Righteousness will always fall utterly short because God's Righteousness demands perfection.

I love the analogy that John MacArthur gives for this. He says picture a bunch of people lined up on the edge of the Grand Canyon. All these people can jump, some a little farther than others, but they can all jump to some degree. And God's Righteousness is like the other side of the Grand Canyon and people are lined up to try and jump across and make it to the other side. So people start jumping, some jump farther than others, but nobody even comes close to making it, in fact they all end up in the same place. Dead at the bottom. Some in different places than others, but they all end up dead. This is how it is trying to achieve Righteousness with our own good works.

So if all are condemned sinners by the Law, and the Law gives us no means of achieving a Right standing with God, and if our human righteousness falls utterly short, then we like Job must ask the question, "*...how can a man be righteous before God?*", Job 9:2. Job saw this great chasm and he asked the right question. This is the question that every religion tries to answer. "How can I escape the Righteous Judgement of God?" And every human religion has the wrong answer, because they try to answer this with good works. But the Bible is clear that we are made Righteous only by grace through faith.

*Ephesians 2:8–9-<sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

The only way we can stand before God who is Righteous, and not suffer His divine wrath, is if we have the gift of Righteousness given to us by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

*Romans 5:17- For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.*

So how do you want to receive God's Righteousness? As a debt owed to you through your merits resulting in wrath and eternal death, or as a gift from God through Jesus Christ resulting in grace and eternal life.

**Romans 4:1-6; 13-16; 19-25; Romans 3:21-24; Galatians 2:16, 19-21** Any religion that claims you can achieve Righteousness by human merit is trampling the blood of Jesus underfoot, Hebrews 10:29.

So if the Law doesn't give Righteousness, but instead condemns all under it, what is the purpose of the Law? God's Law is Righteous, but it was never meant to make us Righteous. The purpose of the Law was to make sin evident and show us the need of a Savior. It was established for Jesus to fulfill the Law.

When God sent Jesus into this world, He sent Jesus as the Propitiation to demonstrate His Righteousness, **Romans 3:24-25a**. God demonstrated His Righteousness by sending Jesus, the Righteous One to fulfill the Law. God's Righteousness was demonstrated through Jesus in two ways.

- 1) In living a sinless life, "**without blemish**" Jesus is the only man to walk this life, sinless, blameless and uphold the Law perfectly, 1 Pet 2:22; 1 Jn 3:5; 2 Cor 5:21.

Jesus said in Matthew 5:17-"*Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.*" Jesus fulfilled the Law perfectly in Righteousness by living a perfect life without sin.

- 2) The second way God demonstrated His Righteousness was by sending Jesus to the cross as the Propitiation for sin

Jesus was the perfect, sinless sacrifice to propitiate God's Righteous Judgment on sin. When God wrote His Righteous Law, He was very specific that the sacrifice for sin had to be **without blemish**. The Passover lamb in Exodus 12:5 had to be **without blemish**. The priests were consecrated by animals **without blemish**, Ex 29:1; and as you read in Leviticus, all the other offerings: the guilt offering, the peace offering, the trespass offering, the sin offering... they all had to be made by an animal **without blemish**. The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin but was given as a type to foreshadow the "Lamb of God" who offered Himself as the sinless substitute. A sacrifice **without blemish** that could appease God's Righteous Wrath.

*1 Peter 1:18–20-<sup>18</sup> knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, <sup>19</sup> but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*

Jesus lived a perfect, sinless life **without blemish** to uphold the Law perfectly and go to the cross as the spotless Lamb, as our sinless substitute. And God demonstrated His Righteousness through Jesus by crushing His Son on the cross with Divine Wrath and punishment, **1 Peter 2:21-25**, Isaiah 53:6, 10.

Jesus took our sins and committed Himself to the One who judges Righteously, knowing this would result in Divine Wrath and punishment. Jesus fulfilled the Righteousness of the Law by fulfilling the curse of sin. Paul says in Galatians 3:13-...*Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written <sup>Deuteronomy 21:23</sup>, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree").* Jesus became a curse for us in our place. He became our substitute by taking on the Righteous punishment for our sin. We were all cursed because we all have sinned, therefore Jesus became a curse for us, not by sinning, but as our vicarious substitute, He hung on the cross and became a curse for us. **2 Corinthians 5:21- For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.** Jesus became our substitute receiving the Righteous Judgment of wrath for our sin from God who is Righteous.

Jesus took on Himself the punishment for sin that the Law Righteously demands. Remember Righteousness is Justice. It is judicial punishment on sin. Jesus kept the Law perfectly and fulfilled the Righteous punishment for sin perfectly by being made a curse for us. He did this so that the Righteous requirement of the Law could be fulfilled in all those who believe in Jesus, **Romans 8:3-4**.

What is the Righteous requirement of the Law? Righteousness requires sin to be punished by death. Therefore, Jesus fulfilled this in Himself by receiving God's Righteous Wrath for the sin of the whole world. He died in our place and paid the penalty of our sin according to the Law. This is why Jesus cried out, "Tetelestai" **Τετέλεσται**, it is finished, paid in full.

God is Righteous and He will, in the Day of Judgment, administer His Righteousness in divine wrath on guilty sinners who have not received Jesus Christ. But for those who have received Jesus, now the Righteousness of God is revealed to us in Justification because Jesus fulfilled the Righteousness requirements of the Law in Himself. He became our Propitiation, and His death appeased God's Righteous Wrath on sin, **1 John 2:1-2; 4:10; Isaiah 53:4-6, 10a**.

But Jesus didn't stay dead. He paid the price of sin on the cross with His own blood, and then He was risen from the dead for our justification. He was risen so that we could be made the Righteousness of God in Him, **Isaiah 53:10b-12**. It was His death that paid the price for sin, it was His resurrection that made us Righteous. **Romans 4:24–25**.

Now that we have received the gift of Righteousness that Jesus paid for with His blood, what are you going to do with it? When you truly understand how costly this gift was, then how could you not give him your life in return? We should be hungering and thirsting for His Righteousness. This what John is saying in his letter. Commit to Him, abide in Him, allow His Word to abide in you, commit to His Righteousness having an earnest expectation of the hope of living with Him forever.

Lets read our section in 1 John again... **1 John 2:28 – 3:3**

This is what we will be looking at next week. What does it mean to practice Righteousness now that we have been given the gift of Righteousness?