

The necessity of Christ's righteousness (Quality: Very good)

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[0 : 00] Well, this evening, as the Lord may condescend to help, I will speak from the 10th chapter in the epistle of Paul to the Romans. And I'll mainly center my remarks around the third and fourth verses.

Verses three and four in the 10th chapter of the epistle of Paul to the Romans. For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth. A wonderful thing, how concerned was the apostle Paul relative to the salvation of his nation, the Jews.

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved. When we think of the treatment that he had received, the rejection that he had experienced in consequence of those that were of influence among the Jews, we realize what a large and wonderfully tender Christian spirit the apostle had in praying for his people, his nation, the Jews.

And my friends, the enlargement of Christianity in our hearts will enable us to pray for those that spitefully use us and persecute us and may say all manner of evil against us falsely for Christ's sake.

[2 : 18] Oh, the spirit of Jesus Christ is not, as it were, a weapon of enmity. It is largely a peaceable approach to the well-being of mankind.

Whatever we may be called upon in the purposes of God to suffer in consequence of man's ignorance, man's misjudgment of our own spirits and so forth, surely it should be an exercise to us to pray for those people.

It should be an anxiety of heart and spirit that they should not be left to reap, as it were, the harvest of their evil doings, but that God might show mercy to them, open the eyes of their understanding and cause them to view things in a most constructive rather than a destructive fashion.

We're told by the Lord himself to pray for those that are opposed to us, that we may have the comfort of seeing changes and improvements in relationships which largely are soured by misrepresentation and misunderstanding among us.

Well, now the apostle is a good example of the spirit of forgiveness that finds its expression in praying for those that are contrary in spirit to his own convictions and his own outlook.

[4 : 23] He had an understanding of the situation of those that were opposed to him as a Christian having been himself a Pharisee.

He claims a Pharisee of the Pharisees. He knows what bitterness was engendered in the hearts of these people who boasted of the favor of God toward them, not knowing that their spirit was alien to the glory of the Lord and the well-being of immortal souls.

He says, For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. Oh, what a need there is of knowledge in the exercise of a zeal in godliness.

For they being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

Are you among those that have submitted yourself to the righteousness of God?

[5 : 51] That is, knowing that to come into the presence of God we need to be clothed in righteousness. Nevertheless, having no righteousness of our own, we are of necessity directed and instructed by the Spirit of God to look away from ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ and see in him the place wherein God himself has provided a righteousness which is acceptable to him and which is a sufficient covering to cover all the nakedness of need that's in us by nature.

And my friends, to submit ourselves. Now, this touches upon the point I made this morning that humility is so essential to acquiesce in the will of God relative to the salvation of our souls.

To be absolutely, unreservedly resting upon that provision which God has made for our acceptance before him in and of himself as the triune Jehovah the God that has provided a perfect salvation to redress all the need of his church and his people submitted themselves submitted themselves if we're going to accept the righteousness that God has provided we have to humble ourselves to an absolute degree as to not cherish any advantage in any way for ourselves but to honestly sincerely and unreservedly confess that we're unworthy that we're unworthy of the least of God's favours that we depend entirely upon his free grace to take us in our natural fallen state and to make us fit to be in his presence and that forevermore.

now the ignorance of God's righteousness was the stumbling block of the Jews it was a stumbling block to the apostle Paul when in the proud and arrogant way he went about persecuting the Christians of his day both in Jerusalem and as we read historically in scripture on his way to Damascus he was bent on expressing a zeal for God as he thought in the persecution of the very people of God and the Lord said ultimately to him it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks he was guilty of fighting against the God who he thought and sought to serve as he went about persecuting casting into prison and assenting we remember in Stephen's death when

Stephen was suffering as a martyr in the cause of the Lord and his truth for they being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness you know we've got in our hearts the principle of pride that is hungry for satisfaction if only we can find some ground upon which to boast an advantage or to take a little glory however small to ourselves then we are more satisfied but my friends there's no ground in the salvation of God in Christ in which we ourselves can find any glory at all what a solemn thing it is to be left in ignorance to a false notion of that which is pleasing and acceptable in the sight of

[11 : 26] God the Lord God is a jealous God you remember in the law it was not allowed that they should unite together or plough together with an ox and an ass there was to be no mixture and we talk sometimes of Lindsay Woolsey garment having been provided a mixture to clothe but no mixture no mixture is acceptable in the sight of God it must be the clear and the plain gift gift of righteousness in and through the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ oh my friends how many have to acknowledge in the outworking of God's illuminating grace that they have been guilty of seeking some advantage whereby to please

God well it's a good motive to seek the pleasure of God but my friends not thinking that by so doing we're finding acceptance with God on that account we must come with a single eye and a humble spirit to acknowledge that the righteousness which is acceptable in the sight of God is the righteousness that he provides and that he imparts by his grace and spirit to the souls of his people and we find do we not as we examine the principles of Paul in his earlier days Saul and subsequently as he preached the word of God that he lays one foundation and one foundation only upon which the church of

Christ must build here we are this evening for they being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness the works in which we may seek to please God are unacceptable to God except the Lord by his grace is the author and maintainer of the principle involved God I say again that pride is such an insidious influence in our hearts that we can think because we do this or do that or do the other that therefore we merit more of the esteem of the

Most High but my friends all those sort of things are false confidences trusting in that which will not give us any merit in the sight of God at all we've got to come as sinners to the great and holy God realizing that God himself has taken account of us in our lost and ruined state and given to us a ground upon which we may with confidence cast our immortal souls knowing that the finished work of Christ is the great end of salvation the great end of the gospel that God has sent into the world well now what an important consideration is righteousness you can't think of heaven indwelt by any creature but one who is perfectly righteous we may say of the angels that serve the

Lord in his immediate presence and under his complete control that they are holy beings that they are those that serve God as the perfection of heaven requires they are obedient to the commandments they receive and according to the will of God they execute the mind of God and we have in scripture certain instances where angels have been sent forth to perform certain works and to deliver certain things with regard to the will of God and an angel speaks with heavenly power into the heart and life of certain individuals and that is one of the offices that these heavenly beings fulfill will but when we think of the holiness of heaven we must appreciate that fallen man needs a covering fallen man requires a righteousness to present himself in the very presence of

[17 : 51] God as God calls him from time into eternity and you see it is not a matter of establishing our own righteousness it is acknowledging what this fourth verse very clearly defines for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness Christ is the end of the law for righteousness there we find in the person of Jesus Christ the law is satisfied the law has no requirement over and above that which the Lord Jesus Christ has supplied in that righteousness which was his rightly and perfectly his as he came into this world from the father born of a woman made subject to the law and he kept the law he magnified the law in a perfect obedience to it in every way and manner no thought ever crossed the mind of the

Lord Jesus Christ which was impure you say well knowing myself surely certain situations almost justify impure thoughts but my friends the Lord Jesus Christ never never had over his holy mind one impure thought they were all perfectly pure and then when we come to words oh how easily he could have slipped and fallen under the provocation of the Pharisees and scribes and hypocrites if he were anything short of God himself and here is an indication of his

Godhead that he never spoke a wrong word he never reacted in a wrong way everything about him was perfectly suited to maintain a righteousness that was acceptable to his father I do always those things that please him he said on one occasion and how true that is and it's part an essential part of our hope of heaven that the Lord Jesus Christ was never provoked to exercise a wrong thought or a wrong word in the surroundings that seem as we read the record of scripture pregnant with provocation and then my friends oh how wonderful was his righteousness in perfect submission and absolute obedience to his father in everything always always holy always pure always right never never did any impurity or blemish mar the righteousness of the

Lord Jesus Christ the law was obediently submitted to and fulfilled in the perfect life and spirit of our Lord well now how different that must be as we examine the comparison the difference between the righteousness of the most holy man that was to be found among those that were Pharisees of the Pharisees and Paul goes very far in his acknowledgement of his zeal to do what he thought to be worthy of his profession as a Pharisee among the

Jews but my friends when we come to contrast the life even of such a character with the pure life of the Savior we find that the life of the apostle Paul would rightly be designated in the common condemnation the righteousness of man is as filthy rags but the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ was perfectly holy perfectly pure yes even when he came to the judgment hall and to the cross of Calvary there was no antagonism in his whole being to the keeping of the will of his father and the perfect obedience of his spirit to everything that was required of him the righteousness that makes the church different from the world in the light of the judgment of God and the eternal consequences of that judgment is dependent upon this those that are in

[24 : 38] Christ and those that are out of Christ those that are in Christ are clothed with purity by imputation made righteous through the righteousness of the Son of God washed in his blood presented in the pure clothing of the life that he lived as opposed to those that have an eye in another direction looking to merit the favor of God by their own energies and own ambitions who as it were reject the gifts of God while they embrace those things that are consistent with their own fallen judgment now

Christ is the end of the law for righteousness oh the law plays havoc with the consciences of the Lord's people from time to time as one thing and the other is brought home to their hearts and they realize how far short they come from what they should be and they mourn their departures from God their offenses in this direction and that direction not only in public but in secret thought and desire yes there is abundant reason why God our maker should be displeased with us and banish us from his presence according to the law but when we come to the obedience of Christ and that imputation of his righteousness as opposed to the imputation of our sin to his suffering death then we come to this great fact for the

Christ is the end of the law for righteousness yes the law is loudly proclaiming that sin is so offensive to God that every sin shall receive the due punishment deserved but we come to the suffering saviour he was made sin for us that knew no sin can we think of anything more obnoxious to the holy mind and perfect obedience of the saviour in the life that he lived yet by the saving purposes of God he was made sin sins of the church brought as it were to his charge and to his condemnation as he stood in the law place room instead of his people and he goes to the end of the law he goes to the end of the law for righteousness he doesn't say it is finished until his knowledge of the law and its requirement was absolutely and perfectly satisfied he had perfectly accomplished that which was given him to sustain and to prosecute as the saviour of his people my friends that is the key to salvation that coming sinners with all the consciousness of their sin and guilt come to him and seek sincerely and humbly and thankfully an interest in his vicarious sufferings and death that for them he suffered paid the penalty of their transgressions and satisfied the law on their behalf that they should be accounted righteous in the sight of

God and acceptable in that holy and happy place which God has prepared for each and every one of his blood bought people for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness oh it's a wonderful truth that there with the law of God righteous and holy as it is crying aloud for satisfaction with regard to the penalty for every sin that is committed we find that in the behalf of his church and his people Christ died to save sinners from their sins sins and here we have the word the soul that sineth it shall surely die and we see the Christ the end of the law for righteousness having died as a substitute of his people that his people should be delivered from the penalty of the law forever and made acceptable to join that holy and happy throng that are in heaven forever and forever so

Christ is the end of the law for righteousness yes a guilty conscience what can we do with it to find any relief from the terror of a stricken conscience knowing that we have failed we have come short of the glory of God we have transgressed in those ways that are so obviously displeasing to our maker well we have to flee to Christ we have to come before him and plead his merit we have to come before him in thankfulness and humbleness of mind realizing that in and through him there is peace and there is pardon peace procured by the atoning sacrifice of the son of

[32 : 08] God pardon forever as God has provided for us a substitute to bear our sins in his own body on the tree and bring an open door even to paradise itself through the satisfaction that he has imparted to our relationship with God well the scripture is very very explicit in the fruit and effect of faith in the person and finished work of the son of God for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation for the scripture saith whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed for there is no difference between the

Jew and the Greek for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him you see it all centers in the faith that God gives to us to look to and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ that is an echo so to speak of the morning meditation it is Christ that died yea rather that's risen again from the dead and he is the only way to God he is the only way to bliss there is no substitute if we die other than as a Christian we are lost but if we die as a Christian that is blessed with faith to trust our salvation into the worthy hands of the Son of God then matters are right matters are right righteousness is ours and we are presented faultless before the throne of

God forever and forever the great question is what do we think of Christ what do we think we are going to do when called at length to submit to the hand of death and come into the immediate presence of him who will call upon us to give our account of those things we've done in the flesh a thought that was mine earlier today was the thought that is rather present among younger people and doesn't have such an influence upon the thinking of those of us that are older now those of us that are older know that it's not going to be long before we must present our souls before

God you know how quickly time passes you know how speedily a year flies by and we get to the stage in life where we look forward and listen sometimes to articles that concern the future plans of government and so on and doubtful whether I shall ever live to see it I think that of the boast that is made of the Olympic Games that are going to eventually be settled in our country I doubt I shall be here when they are present in our country because that period of time will make me a very old man comparatively and you say well here we are in 2008 and it's only three or four years yes but add those three or four years onto my age and it's a big harvest that takes place between my age now and my age that will be then and it's a great doubt well yes that's the thinking of older people then you come to the young people and young people sometimes think that because they're as youthful as they are it's a long road in front and they may be in consequence of that consideration feeling that well the things of the soul and the solemnities that concern eternity in the future concerns that can be largely waived for the present and more keenly attended to when the days the promise of the future is considerably shorter my friends

I've known in my school days a boy in the same class as I was in was knocked off his cycle and killed he was he wasn't in his teens when that happened to him now what if that had been me me what if that had been me we go on through life and sometimes it's not unprofitable to walk down a row of graves and just see the ages of the people that have been buried in those graves you know they're not all old people are they God has set time when we shall have to submit to the hour and article of death there's a time to be born and there's a time to die you say well this is a morbid meditation my friends it's an essential warning what if you in the days of your youth are subject to a set of circumstances which suddenly and unexpectedly terminate your life here below what's going to happen to you then what's going to happen to you then what if you've treated the righteous the person of Jesus

[39 : 44] Christ his life his death the shedding of his precious blood the complete offering that he offered as the lamb of God to take away the sin you've treated that with indifference you'll have nothing you'll have nothing to look to and trust in because you've turned away from Christ I'm here this evening to say look solemnly think of this solemnly apply the possibility remote as you think it is what if God called me soon into his presence what will happen to my soul I'll tell you this if you're a simple believer in the Lord Jesus Christ and by

God's grace prayerfully recognising your exposure to a situation which is beyond your control and your anxious prepare me gracious God to stand before thy face thy spirit must the work perform for it is all of grace you can be happy you know those that are cut off in youth and go to heaven they've got the advantage of those that live to be old you say what oh but if you knew what heaven was like you'd say it's the most attractive position and condition that ever could be thought of eye hath not seen nor ear heard neither has entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for his people my friends let's look at the prize let's look at the situation of the redeemed when they come into the very presence of

God peace joy happiness the presence of God never anything to disturb the mind or cause anxiety to the soul what a wonderful thing to have a hope in the Lord Jesus Christ and to have taken on board what I tried to bring to you this day that is your need of a saviour and there's only one saviour only one saviour that can secure your future in eternity and that is simply the Lord Jesus Christ and I repeat there's none other name under heaven given among men there's none other no there are other names that are brought before us and suggested to us as some benefit in regard to our relationship with God but my

Bible tells me there's no other name but the name of Jesus Christ therefore if you die and are not a Christian you're lost but if God through his mercy and by his grace sobers your thought and exercises your spirit to be right with him and you are made a Christian you'll go to heaven you'll go to heaven and nothing can prevent it nothing can hinder it be your sins great as you look back over life you feel ashamed of so much that you've thought and said and done my friends if Christ has died in your behalf all those things are blotted out the Lord blots out the sins of his people as a thick cloud and he remembers them no more forever oh young people don't think of these truths to be something belonging to the elderly they have an application to youthful years and remember what the scripture says it's good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth oh it's good for a person to be exercised while young and tender in years whose feet are directed in the ways of righteousness looking to

Jesus and hanging upon his precious promises that speak only for the well-being of his followers in time and to eternity amen amen and to Jesus and find efforts to be to be