

SET FREE!

August 2010

Don't Spend
Your Life
In The
Bath Tub!



God is treating you and me as though we are in right standing with Him. Why – because He has made us righteous. Not based on our actions, but based on what Jesus has already done for us at Calvary to make us righteous.

Unfortunately many believers don't fully grasp that fact. Paul wrote about how many in Israel, during his lifetime, missed that fact too.

Romans 10:2-3 (Amplified) *“I bear them witness that they have a [certain] zeal and enthusiasm for God, but it is not enlightened and according to [correct and vital] knowledge. For being ignorant of the righteousness that God ascribes (which makes one acceptable to Him in word, thought and deed), and seeking to establish a righteousness (a means of salvation) of their own, they did not obey or submit themselves to God's righteousness.”*

There is a movement within the present day church, in which I see people are being deceived. I believe it's due to the very fact that they are confusing righteousness by the works of the Law with the righteousness or justification that is ours by faith.

To a great extent this is due to ignorance. Much teaching is based on the Old Testament. In the minds of many, there is not a clear definition between the Old and the New Covenants. They will read about how God dealt with the Nation of Israel in the Old Covenant and not recognize that He is not dealing with the Church or even us individually today, in that same manner that he did then.

In the Old Covenant, God would say things to Israel, like:

Deuteronomy 28:15 (KJV)

But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:

This becomes understood as, “Smarten up and obey the Law or I will bring judgment on you. And if you do smarten up, obey the Law and do better, I will bless you.”

So within this element of the church, the teaching is, “if we’ll all do better, pray more, fast more - if we’ll all search our hearts more to purge out all of the sin in our lives. If we’ll look real hard to find even the last bit of sin, then God will be able to move in the church and in the land, and He’ll start to pour out His power and blessings upon us.”

This self-purging - this trying to be more righteous - goes on and on - in a futile effort to be good enough and clean enough and righteous enough for God to move amongst us.

It’s almost cruel. It’s like the carrot on the stick. You know that if you hang that carrot out there, the horse will run faster and faster hoping he’ll eventually catch up to that carrot. But he never will.

Some times I think the church spends too much time in the bathtub.

Many think that if they get clean enough, then revival will break out in the land or at least in the local church.

If that is what they are trying to accomplish, then they are on a hopeless quest.

In fact it is **the deception of self-righteousness**. Doing good and not doing wrong is simply keeping the Law. But we cannot be justified or made more righteous by keeping the rules and trying to clean ourselves more and more.

Yes there is passion there and they have good intentions, just like it said of Israel in those verses in **Romans 10:2-3**. You can, however, be passionate and still be heading in the wrong direction.

We need to use our faith, not our works. Constantly seeking after forgiveness or justification, is a work - a dead work - a religious work. Because if after having worked at getting clean until you figure you are clean, then you have done it on your own.

When it came to being righteous Paul discounted all personal achievement or effort. He wanted only to –

Philippians 3:9 (KJV)

Be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

“And be found *in Him*” Not *in the bathtub!*

Philippians 3:10 (Philips) *“For now **my place is in him**, and I am not dependent upon any of the self-righteousness achieved of the Law. God has given me that genuine righteousness which comes from faith in Christ.”*

My right standing, says Paul, doesn't come from keeping all the rules or from being religious or from hours of scrubbing in the tub, it comes by having faith in what Christ has done for me.

2 Corinthians 5:17 & 21 (KJV)

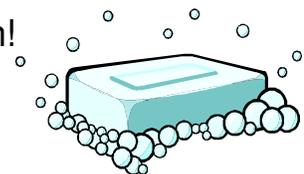
17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

During the middle Ages, the Church of Rome told people that they had to please God through confession, penance and works. The Reformers came along and said, what the Word teaches, that the **“just shall live by faith”**.

We walk and live the Christian life, in right standing with God by faith, not by having 24 hour, seven day a week prayer meetings or marching around the city or burning our TV sets. That's that carrot on the stick that will never be caught. We need to not keep hopelessly trying to catch it.

We are forensically righteous. We've been **made** clean!

Don't keep scrubbing!



Being righteousness is demonstrated in the Christian life style.

The Christian life is to live like the person God has made you. Talking like, acting like, working like, doing things like a righteous saint would. That's a life of sanctification and holiness. This is what we press toward.

It is the walk of excellence.

In doing so, we walk and act in love not in fear of retribution from God. God is not judging you or the world. He isn't withholding blessings from you or the church based on our behavior.

You need to accept that fact - accept it by faith rather than trying to get yourself or the church clean enough or good enough for God to pour Himself out of and through.

The Church is the Body of Christ and the Body isn't dirty!

Jesus gave Himself in order to clean it up –

Ephesians 5:25-26 (CEV)

²⁵*A husband should love his wife as much as Christ loved the church and gave his life for it.* ²⁶**He made the church holy by the power of his word, and he made it pure by washing it with water.** ²⁷*Christ did this, so that he would have a glorious and holy church, without faults or spots or wrinkles or any other flaws.*

Our efforts won't make it cleaner than what He has already made it.

Jesus doesn't need you and me to give Him a bath because He is in right standing with the Father – He is totally clean. We are “in Christ Jesus”; therefore we don't need to constantly bathe either, because we are His body, His church, the Body that He has **already washed clean**.

Realize that God has cleaned you up and that waiting until you *feel* righteous or clean is a futile effort. All that it will do is keep you from doing the works of righteousness.

The works of righteousness include loving and serving one another and loving and serving the lost. That's living like the clean Body we are.

**Don't spend your life in the bathtub.
Instead be out there living like the
righteous person you
have been made.**