

Subject: FREEDOM

Question to Ponder:

- What makes a person righteous before God?
- Are you serving the Lord out of an obligation?
- Are you afraid to ask God, because you don't feel like you have been living good enough?
- Are you enjoying the benefits and blessings of being made right with God or are you still trying to earn them?

Main Points of Today's Message

- Our standing with God depends not on our willpower and efforts but our faith in Christ.
- A performance based relationship with God, will leave you constantly feeling guilty, spiritually drain, and a lack of joy.
- Are you in a love relationship with God or a legal relationship?
- You and I are NOT righteous because we always do what is right, nor are we accepted by God because of our good behavior, nor does our sins cancel out Christ righteous in us. You and I are RIGHTEOUS because of Christ.

Life Application

- You & I will never be able to make ourselves right with God by trying to be good enough.
- "There is a huge difference between being bound in relationship by the joy of love, and being tied up in obligation and guilt. God never intended that His people be bound by an endless list of external pressures" By Leroy & Margy Hill
- Stop adding undo stress and pressure by trying to maintain good behavior in order to make yourself right before God. Accept that **you are already right** in God through faith in Jesus Christ.

Scripture Text

2 Cor 5:14-15 NLT

14 **Either way, Christ's love controls us.** Since we believe that Christ died for all, we also believe that we have all died to our old life. 15 He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them.

2 Cor 5:21 NIV

21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, **so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.**

Rom 3:20-28 NLT

20 For no one can ever be made right with God by doing what the law commands.

The law simply shows us how sinful we are. **21 But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him** without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. **22 We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ.** And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. **23 For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. 24 Yet God, with undeserved kindness, declares that we are righteous. He did this through Christ Jesus** when he freed us from the penalty for our sins. **25 For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood.** This sacrifice shows that God was being fair when he held back and did not punish those who sinned in times past, **26 for he was looking ahead and including them in what he would do in this present time. God did this to demonstrate his righteousness, for he himself is fair and just, and he declares sinners to be right in his sight when they believe in Jesus. 27 Can we boast, then, that we have done anything to be accepted by God? No, because our acquittal is not based on obeying the law. It is based on faith. 28 So we are made right with God through faith and not by obeying the law.**

Rom 4:1-12, 22-25 NLT

4 Abraham was, humanly speaking, the founder of our Jewish nation. What did he discover about being made right with God? 2 If his good deeds had made him acceptable to God, he would have had something to boast about. But that was not God's way. 3 For the Scriptures tell us, "Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith." **4 When people work, their wages are not a gift, but something they have earned. 5 But people are counted as righteous, not because of their work, but because of their faith in God who forgives sinners. 6 David also spoke of this when he described the happiness of those who are declared righteous without working for it: 7 "Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sins are put out of sight. 8 Yes, what joy for those whose record the Lord has cleared of sin." 9 Now, is this blessing only for the Jews, or is it also for uncircumcised Gentiles? Well, we have been saying that Abraham was counted as righteous by God because of his faith.** **10 But how did this happen? Was he counted as righteous only after he was circumcised, or was it before he was circumcised? Clearly, God accepted Abraham before he was circumcised! 11 Circumcision was a sign that Abraham already had faith and that God had already accepted him and declared him to be righteous—even before he was circumcised. So Abraham is the spiritual father of those who have faith but have not been circumcised. They are counted as righteous because of their faith. 22 And because of Abraham's faith, God counted him as righteous. 23 And when God counted him as righteous, it wasn't just for Abraham's benefit. It was recorded 24 for our benefit, too, assuring us that God will also count**

us as righteous if we believe in him, the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. 25 He was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised to life to make us right with God.

Phil 3:9 NLT

I no longer count on my own righteousness through obeying the law; rather, I become righteous through faith in Christ. For God's way of making us right with himself depends on faith.

Rom 9:30-32 NLT

30 What does all this mean? Even though the Gentiles were not trying to follow God's standards, they were made right with God. And it was by faith that this took place. 31 But the people of Israel, who tried so hard to get right with God by keeping the law, never succeeded. 32 Why not? Because they were trying to get right with God by keeping the law instead of by trusting in him.

Rom 10:1-4 NLT

10 Dear brothers and sisters, the longing of my heart and my prayer to God is for the people of Israel to be saved. 2 I know what enthusiasm they have for God, but it is misdirected zeal. 3 For they don't understand God's way of making people right with himself. Refusing to accept God's way, they cling to their own way of getting right with God by trying to keep the law. 4 For Christ has already accomplished the purpose for which the law was given. As a result, all who believe in him are made right with God.

Gen 15:1-6 NLT

15 Some time later, the Lord spoke to Abram in a vision and said to him, "Do not be afraid, Abram, for I will protect you, and your reward will be great."² But Abram replied, "O Sovereign Lord, what good are all your blessings when I don't even have a son? Since you've given me no children, Eliezer of Damascus, a servant in my household, will inherit all my wealth. 3 You have given me no descendants of my own, so one of my servants will be my heir." 4 Then the Lord said to him, "No, your servant will not be your heir, for you will have a son of your own who will be your heir." 5 Then the Lord took Abram outside and said to him, "Look up into the sky and count the stars if you can. That's how many descendants you will have!" 6 And Abram believed the Lord, and the Lord counted him as righteous because of his faith.