

Righteousness Only by Faith

Key Verses:
“Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: ... But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, ... Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.”
—Romans 3:20-22

Selected Scripture:
Romans 3:9-22

John 3:16,17; Heb. 7:25-28

The Apostle Paul recognized in himself the need for the Lord’s sacrifice on his behalf, and he thanked God for it, though he realized he was still imperfect. “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh

OUR KEY VERSES STATE

that no one could be justified, or made righteous, by the deeds of the Law given to Israel through Moses, “for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” Israel’s Law, given to them by God, was perfect. However, no Israelite nor any other member of the fallen human race could keep God’s perfect law. Even faithful David wrote concerning himself, “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.” (Ps. 51:5) It took the sacrifice of the only begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ, to provide the ransom price and open the pathway to bring mankind back to life.—

the law of sin.” (Rom. 7:25) God has graciously arranged that the merit of Christ’s sacrifice, as a “robe of righteousness,” covers the unintentional weaknesses and blemishes of the followers of Jesus.—Isa. 61:10

There is then “no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus,” who has made them “free from the law of sin and death.” (Rom. 8:1,2) Though not actually perfect, these footstep followers of the Master are to be developing a new mind, and new heart’s desires, which God accepts. We are told in Philippians 2:5, “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” A disposition of heart and full devotion to God patterned after Christ Jesus is to be our goal in this endeavor.

The Apostle Paul gives us further instruction when he says, “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you.” (II Cor. 13:5) Being “in the faith” is much more than mere belief and acceptance of Jesus’ sacrifice as our Redeemer, though that is the basis of Christian faith. To be “in the faith” means also to share Jesus’ sacrificing spirit, his humble disposition, and his desire to serve others. Examination of ourselves along these lines is an important part of our life in Christ.

In addition, we are to daily go to God in prayer to seek his guidance and help that we may continue to make progress in developing our character, especially along the lines of the fruits and graces of the spirit. (Gal. 5:22,23; II Pet. 1:5-8) Love is the summation of all these character qualities, and thus it should be the principle thing to be studied, developed, and demonstrated daily in our lives. It will be an evidence that we have the spirit of God and the righteousness of our Lord working in us.

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”—Rom. 8:16,17 ■