

The Abiding Word Online

Biblical Principles for Christian Growth

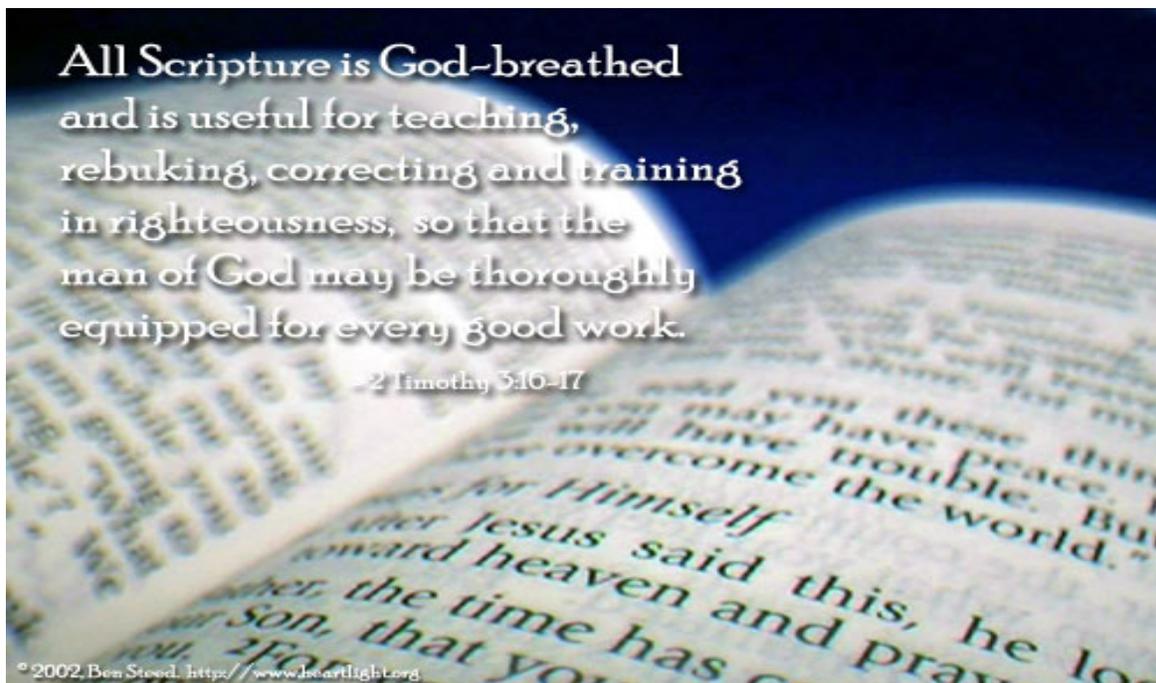
Online Bible Study

The following article is part of a series of study notes, outlines and discussions on Biblical Subjects. The goal is to deal with and express Biblical Principles for Christian Growth.

This material and all study notes may be used freely for personal use and the study of God's word. None of this material may be sold or used for financial gain.

All is presented for the glory of God and His son Jesus Christ.

Edward E. Healy



No.9- The Righteousness of God

Introduction:

In a Sunday morning Bible class we are looking into Paul's letter to the church in Rome. This is a church that is made up of Gentile and Jewish Christians. Of course each has their own issues to deal with as they walk the Christian walk. Coming from totally different backgrounds into the fellowship of the redeemed in Christ they carry traditions that influence their thinking.

The Jewish Christians want to hold onto their traditions and ways of worship to God that were taught in the Scriptures under the Old Testament Law. Traditions handed down from Moses and adapted in each generation to fit what they viewed as "righteous living" for God. They were living under a law system in view of obtaining favor with God. They believed that "they knew" God and therefore were in the best position to teach the whole church.

The Gentile Christians were well aware of the legal codes and traditions their Jewish Brethren were trying to impose upon them. They thought of the Grace of God as the means to make them right. They saw a grace that would not require them to adopt the traditions of the Jewish Christians. However, they did not understand that even if they did good things and were good people in the eyes of others they still had a major problem as did the Jewish Christians. They were looking at life as doing good deeds, being a good person and therefore showing that they also thought man could obtain God's blessings through keeping a law of good works.

Paul in this letter lays out in a very logical manner the need for the **Righteousness of God** rather than any other form of self righteousness. Self righteousness which comes as a result of any type of works system whether it is the Law of Moses, a law of codes or any other standard that is rooted in a system of deeds or actions done for righteousness. Jewish and Gentile Christians needed to come to the point of understanding that it was not what they wanted or how they felt about their life, it was what God requires of each person that brings about the blessing of God's Righteousness in their life.

In this letter Paul compares a "Law of Works" system to a "Law of Faith" system and shows the church that God's Righteousness is a free gift based upon His Grace and our response of faith to accept it. The key is our response to accepting God's Free Gift. Even today we need to know and understand the will of God regarding our walk and desire for righteous living. I must come to know God and acknowledge Him as my Lord and Master.

Let me encourage you to read Paul's Letter to the Roman Church and carefully note the logical plan he reveals. When I understand and apply the truth revealed in this letter to my life I can walk in the light with confidence knowing who truly is in control and who will always watch over me.

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.
[Rom 8:1-3 NIV]

In the passage below God is revealed as the giver but man either accepts or rejects what God has to offer. In this foundation scripture Paul begins to show that all need the Gospel in order to receive the **Righteousness of God.**

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator — who is forever praised. Amen.

Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them. [Rom 1:16-2:1NIV]

In the words of this letter Paul continues to lay out the logic and need for man to turn to the truth about God, the truth which God has revealed in the scriptures. All men are without excuse if they refuse to follow God. If I refuse to follow God I will stand by myself, alone on judgment day and I will be judged by my deeds and the law I lived under.

Will it be a law of faith or of works? This letter to the Roman church holds the key to understanding God's grace. If you read and understand then God will have you and you will have the **Righteousness of God.**

When I was a child I was given my first Bible by my Grandmother. In the cover was noted this scripture. It has always haunted and stirred me to seek God's truth.

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. [2 Tim 2:15 NIV]

Finally, when I am challenged with worldly concepts and ideas that may or may not have reference to righteous living I am drawn to this scripture. Here I have found that my roots need to be grounded, planted firmly in the Abiding Word of God.

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish. [Psalms 1 NIV]

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all — how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died — more than that, who was raised to life — is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

As it is written:

***"For your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."***

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. [Rom 8:28-9:1 NIV]

- EEHealy

February 9, 2009