

“What Is Your Righteousness Worth”

All Scripture is KJV: Matthew 5:20

INTRODUCTION: WHAT DOES THE BIBLE HAVE TO SAY ON THIS MATTER.

- The first sermon that Jesus preached in His earthly ministry is well known and is famous through the religious ecumenical churches, and this sermon is known as the “Sermon on the Mount”.
- In fact the whole of Matthew chapter 5 through to Matthew chapter 7 are all known as the “Sermon on the Mount”.

One of the most common expressions amongst Christians is that they are concerned with “their own righteousness”.

- Have you ever stopped to think about that, and what does righteousness mean?
 1. A lot of Christians are concerned that they are “Not right” with God?
 2. Do you fall into that same category?
- Christians are generally concerned about their “righteousness” and so do many “things” to try and please God, and to get onto His right side?
 3. Is that not true.....
 4. Can you identify with that?

Well.....what does the bible say.....

Matthew 5:20

²⁰ For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

So.....

- At the time when Jesus was delivering the message and preaching the Sermon on the Mount he was speaking to the multitudes of people who did not know exactly who he was.
- These were people who were following him because he became popular amongst people for the works and miracles which he had done to many of them.
- Also when he was preaching he had the Pharisees and the Sadducees amongst the multitudes putting their two cent worth of religion in his face.
 1. So remember.....these people were not church going people.
 2. These were not Christians....(They were the multitudes)
 3. This was not a message to the church....(It was a message to the disciples)

4. But this was a message to draw the people's attention to a more powerful message in which they could have something much more than hope and dreams on this earth.
5. After all many of these multitudes of people had been under the teachings or had at least heard of the teaching of the OT. Because Jesus even mentioned that fact in His message on the Sermon on the Mount.

So.....This was a sermon to draw the multitudes of people's attention to how they could be blessed if they indeed followed Jesus sermon which he was preaching.

Matthew 5:6.

⁶ Blessed are they which do hunger and **thirst after righteousness**: for they shall be filled.

Matthew 5:10

¹⁰ Blessed are they which are **persecuted for righteousness' sake**: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

➤ So.....if righteousness was a big deal.....then what did Jesus mean by righteousness?

1. Remember.....these people he was addressing were the disciples?
2. So what was the message about?

Well.....let's look at that.

Matthew 5:2-12 (the blessed)

Jesus taught this to his disciples.

² And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

³ **Blessed are the poor in spirit**: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ **Blessed are they that mourn**: for they shall be comforted.

⁵ **Blessed are the meek**: for they shall inherit the earth.

⁶ **Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness**: for they shall be filled.

⁷ Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

¹⁰ **Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake**: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ **Blessed are ye**, when men shall **revile you, and persecute you**, and shall say all manner of evil **against you falsely, for my sake**.

1. In verse 12, we see Jesus switching his preaching to pass on a blessing to the disciples when he speaks of them as having righteousness. But that was not the case when he was preaching to the rest of the multitudes and the Pharisees and Sadducees.
2. Here he acknowledges the disciples as being already fit for the kingdom of heaven. Because he said to them here "**great is YOUR reward in heaven**".
3. When you are being persecuted because of Jesus, just know he said that you will have a reward in heaven.
 - Even though men are falsely accusing you for your "stance" on believing in Jesus just know that Jesus is the one who is giving out the rewards not them.
 - This is similar and the same as "why do the heathen rage and imagine such a vain thing as we saw in the message of Psalm 2:1 and Acts 4:25 last week.
4. Remember also that the Sermon Jesus preached in Luke 6:17 is not the same sermon that he preached in Matthew 5-7.
5. The sermon in Luke 6:17 is known technically as the "Sermon on the Plain". This message had much of the same content that he preached in Matthew 5-7 but is not the same message. It contains many of the points of Matthew 5-7 that he needed to cover but it is not the same message.
 - So now.....As we get back to our text this morning we examining the title of "What's Your Righteousness Worth"
 - We the answer is also included in verse 12 of Matthew 5.

¹² Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: **for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.**

1. You see in this verse that Jesus referred back to the OT. The OT was what He had come to fulfil.
2. Everything in the OT was true.....even although the scribes and Pharisees were trying to play it down.
3. The scriptures say in Acts 10:43 that "**all the Prophets**" which is a reference to the OT bear witness of Him.

Acts 10:43

To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

Luke 24:44

And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, **which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.**

John 5:39

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and **they are they which testify of me.**

1. In the scriptures God dictates what is righteousness not us.
2. Our righteousness is not what God thinks of as being righteous.
3. When Abraham "**believed God**", it was only then that God called him "righteous". But before then he was just an unbeliever in the presence of God.

Genesis 15:6

And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

Galatians 2:21

I do not frustrate the grace of God: **for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.**

1. So according to the scripture "**righteousness**" cannot come by the Law.
2. Which means no amount of "doing good things" can make you righteous.
3. Which means if you think that you can somehow do good God will be pleased with you?
4. Many times I hear the words from Christians saying "I am not right with God".
 - a. Do they actually know what they are saying?
 - b. Because if you are saying those words then it simply means that you have not called upon the name of the Lord for Salvation?

Galatians 3:5-7 King James Version (KJV)

⁵ He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

⁶ Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

⁷ Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

James 2:23

And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, **Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness**: and he was called the Friend of God.

Galatians 3:21

Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

- ✓ What is “Our righteousness worth”?
- ✓ The answer is nothing. It is worth nothing?

Galatians 5:4-6 King James Version (KJV)

⁴ Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

⁵ For we through the Spirit wait for the **hope of righteousness by faith.**

⁶ For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

1. You see “righteousness comes only by “faith””.
2. And that righteousness when it comes means that you have “believed”.
3. So when we look at our scripture of Matthew 5:20 we find that the scribes and the Pharisees thought that they were righteous. But Jesus said that they were not.
4. Jesus even said that unless “your righteousness” “Exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees you shall not inherit the kingdom of God.
5. So at this point their righteousness had not exceeded that.
6. Which meant they were still not saved.
 - Also in Matthew 5:10 when Jesus said “Blessed are they which are **persecuted for righteousness' sake**: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
 - It could not have been to the unsaved .
 - It must have been to the saved, because for righteousness you had to be a believer.

✚ The scriptures in Titus further conform this.....

Titus 3:5-6 King James Version (KJV)

⁵ **Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us,** by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

⁶ Which he shed on us **abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;**

- ✓ If our righteousness could have saved us, then God would not have sent His Son to shed His own blood for us.

- ✓ Remember this. You and I will never be sufficiently good to be worth anything to God.
- ✓ If it was not for Jesus we would all be doomed to perish in our own sins. And we would ultimately have to pay the price for our sins in Hell.

Ephesians 4:24 And that ye put on the new man, **which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.**

- ✓ So according to the scripture righteousness is from God.
- ✓ It is what God creates in us. We cannot create it.

Ephesians 5:9

(For the **fruit of the Spirit** is in all goodness and **righteousness** and truth;)

- ❖ **The truth is folks.....**
- ❖ You and I will never be able to put on the armour of God if we had not believed. And with that armour we have the protection from all evil. Look what scriptures says....

Ephesians 6:13-15 King James Version (KJV)

¹³ Wherefore **take unto you the whole armour of God**, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

¹⁴ Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the **breastplate of righteousness.**

¹⁵ And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

- ❖ That can only happen when you believe.
- ❖ Righteousness is not from the law.

Philippians 1:11

Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

- ❖ The Apostle Paul quoted this about his righteousness in Philippians 3:8-10.
- ❖ He said.....

Philippians 3:8-10 King James Version (KJV)

⁸ Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

⁹ **And 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:**

¹⁰That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

- ✚ So when Jesus preached the message in Sermon on the mount it mean that they would have to seek his righteousness.
- ✚ For the Christian there is a crown. This crown is not for anyone else.

2 Timothy 3:16

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, **for instruction in righteousness:**

2 Timothy 4:8

Henceforth there is laid up for me **a crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

- ✚ There is righteousness which is not of God.
- ✚ And there is righteousness which is of God. (a person who believes in Jesus).
- ✚ This is the sermon of the mount.

CLOSE IN PRAYER.....