

Jesus Spoke of Practising our Righteousness

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(When we talk of “righteousness”, we must remind ourselves, that first of all the word “righteousness” refers to **the gracious gift of God to men, whereby all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, are brought into a right relationship with God, and are declared righteous in His sight.** They are “justified.” Romans 5:1,9. (right standing with God.) **This gift of righteousness is imputed or reckoned to all that believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.** Romans 4:1-12.

This is a gift or righteousness and is not obtained by keeping laws, or by personal holiness or merit, but solely on the basis of faith in Jesus. Ephesians 2:4-10.)

However Scripture also speaks of **the righteousness of right action.** 1John 3:7, 2:29, 3:10.

The reckoned gift of righteousness, given to us when we believe in Jesus, over flows into our behaviour and life style, and results in right action.

In Matthew 6 verse one Jesus warns us not to **“practise our righteousness”** before men because then we will receive no reward from God.

In the KJV it reads, “Take heed that you do not your **alms** before men, to be seen of them: otherwise you will have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.”

The Greek word that is translated “alms” in the KJV, Matthew 6:1, is the Greek word “dikaiosune”, which is translated “righteousness” in Matthew 3:15, 5:6,10,20,33, 21:32.

In the KJV, “dikaiosune” is translated as “righteousness” 94 times, and is the main Greek for righteousness.

(Young’s Concordance, Vine’s Expository Dictionary of N.T. Words, Zondervan Parallel N.T. in Greek and English.)

In Matthew 6:2-4, Jesus speaks of **giving to the poor and needy** as an act of righteousness.

This is **our duty to our neighbour; to love our neighbour as ourselves.** Matthew 22:39.

The need to care for the poor and needy is a priority in the N.T. Matthew 25:35-40.

It is righteous and just for us to care for the needy who we contact. Luke 16:19-30, James 2:14-17.

Justice, as well as righteousness, is an aspect of the character of God. God is just. Deuteronomy 32:4, Acts 3:14, 1John1:9.

To love our neighbour as ourselves is to act in justice, or fairness or equity. Matthew 22:39.

To love God and obey Him is to act in righteousness. Matthew 22:37.

Righteousness and justice are the foundation of God’s throne. Psalm 89:14.

God expects us to give out of the abundance which He has given to us, to help those who are struggling to have enough food, drink, shelter, clothing, and companionship and comfort. Matthew 25:35-40.

God expects us to be just, fair and equal as He is. Matthew 5:48.

He fed the five thousand and the four thousand when they were in need. He did so in abundance with many baskets of food left over. Matthew 14:13-21, 15:32-39. Jesus said, “They need not go away, you give them something to eat!” Matthew 14:16.

“The works that I do, you shall do also.” John 14:12.

In Matthew 6:5-15, Jesus speaks about prayer, which is our duty towards God. Matthew 22:37, Matthew 6:9-13.

Prayer is an aspect of our duty towards God. Prayer is an act of righteousness.

Jesus said, **“Men and women ought always to pray and not to lose heart.”** Luke 18:1.

God is the Father of all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Matthew 6:26,32.

He is the Creator, Sustainer and Source of all life. Matthew 19:4, Colossians 1:17, Hebrews 1:3, Matthew 6:26-33.

God is the Fountain of Living Waters, the Source of all Life, and prayer is the way we connect to the Fountain of God’s love. Jeremiah 2:13, Psalm 36:9, Jeremiah 17:13, John 4:10,14, John 7:37-39.

Prayer is the lifeline to God. Matthew 21:22, Matthew 7:7,8,11, Luke 11:5-13.

Prayer in faith is the lifeline to God. 1Thessalonians 5:17, Ephesians 6:18, 2Peter 1:3,4, Hebrews 6:12.

Prayer in faith, that is sourced in **the promises of God, revealed to us by the Holy Spirit, is the lifeline to God.**

The prayer of faith, is the prayer, that believes that we receive what we ask for when we ask. Mark 11:24, James 1:6.

The Holy Spirit quickened Word of promise, is the heart of faith. It is the will of God. 1John 5:14,15.

As we read the Word, the Holy Spirit draws our attention to a verse of God’s Word. This is a gift of faith. Romans 10:17.

Believe that this is God’s will. Believe it, receive it and rejoice in it. Mark 11:24, 1John 5:14,15.

In Matthew 6:16-18, Jesus speaks about fasting, which goes with prayer, self-control, and being focused upon the Lord and His will. Fasting is a way we “practise righteousness.”

The Holy Spirit leads us into a pattern of fasting that is acceptable to God.

It may not be in the same way as others around us.

Fast as unto the Lord and not unto men. Focus on the Lord and His Word in fasting.

Sing unto the Lord the words of the Scripture and songs that exalt the Lord.

In a way fasting is saying, **“You are my Source of Life, O Lord,** and I am looking to You, and trusting You, for everything.”

After a while, we will see that the awareness of the presence of the Lord, increases through fasting.

Practising righteousness is the way we lay up treasures in heaven, rather than on the earth. Matthew 6:19-21.

Let us focus our eye **on the Lord** and **how we can help others** who are in need, physically, mentally or spiritually.

Hebrews 12:2, Colossians 3:1-3, Galatians 5:13, 6:10.

Be generous and kind. Ephesians 4:32. Share the Good news of Jesus with others as often as possible. Acts 8:4.

The Lord will pour out His abundance upon us as we give out to others. Luke 6:38, 27-36.

As we live a life of helping and caring for others, the Lord will give us more; unto abundance. Matthew 25:29, 13:12.

In all things let us trust the Lord to meet our every need, and refuse anxiety. Matthew 6:25-34.

Consider the sparrows, they do not sow or reap, but our Heavenly Father feeds them. Matthew 6:26.

We are of much more value than many sparrows.

God knows our needs and he will hear our cry. Psalm 37:25.

As we continue to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, all the things we have need of will be supplied unto us. Matthew 6:33.

Let us continue to help people to come to Jesus, and to surrender to His will and authority, in every situation of life.

And let us continue to seek to do the will of God in our daily lives. John 14:15.