

Righteous, Holy, & Whole

Delivered - August 4, 2024

Scriptures - [2 Corinthians 5.21](#)

EW Kinion says, “The moment a man knows that he is the righteousness of God, and knows what that means, the devil is sufficiently defeated.”

INTRO

If you believe that Jesus is who He says He is, and the kindness and love of God has brought you to repentance for your sin, then:

You are as righteous as Jesus.

You are as holy as Jesus.

And how you react to what I just said is an indicator of how whole you are. I'm going to explain what I mean by that, and we'll connect righteousness and holiness to our wholeness in a minute...but for now, I want you to take inventory of how you felt when I said you are as righteous and holy as Jesus.

[2 Corinthians 5.21](#);

"He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we would become (ginomai - be begotten, be born) the righteousness of God in Christ."

I have 3 points that I will make today:

POINT 1: It is illegal for you to think something about yourself that Jesus doesn't think about you.

POINT 2: Being righteous and holy is *not* what religion has told you it is.

POINT 3: Knowing we are righteous heals our brokenness and makes us whole.

POINT 1: It is illegal for you to think something about yourself that Jesus doesn't think about you.

If God says that His Son became sin so that you could become the righteousness of God, then friend, you are righteous. And God's not impressed by false humility and "I'm just a sinner saved by grace" nonsense. Jesus took on sin so that you could take on righteousness. And not just righteousness. By taking on your sin, Jesus made you holy. And if God says to you that you are holy, as He does in [1 Peter 2.9](#) and [Hebrews 10.10](#) and [Hebrews 12.10](#) and [Colossians 1.22](#) and [Colossians 3.12](#) and [Ephesians 4:24](#), then it is illegal in the kingdom of God for you to think otherwise.

Paul tells the church in [Colossians 3.12](#) that they are,
"...chosen by God, holy and beloved."

The church cannot believe in and preach the finished work of Christ and simultaneously believe that we are still unclean. The church has allowed the spirit of religion to speak old covenant realities to a new covenant people.

We hear Isaiah say,
"Woe is me for I am unclean"
and we take on his perspective for ourselves.

We hear Isaiah say,
"We are all unclean, and our righteousness is like filthy rags"
and because it's between the covers of the bible we assume Isaiah is speaking for us. Friends, we must understand the full counsel of God. Isaiah, under an inferior covenant, knew nothing of the regenerative, redemptive, restorative blood of Emmanuel. Isaiah couldn't understand that the same God who he saw high and lifted up would wrap Himself in flesh, descend into the depths of humanity's sin, and become unclean FOR US. The covenant that Isaiah was under was a shadow of the good things to come ([Hebrews 10.1](#)).

So for anyone on this side of the cross to take on the perspective of a man under the old covenant is like a slave who has received his freedom yet continues to live as if he were in bondage.

"For freedom Christ has set us free" ([Galatians 5.1](#)).

Untold multitudes are raised in a religious system that enforces old covenant language as a weapon to control them. The language of the new covenant is not "woe is me for I am unclean"...the language of the Jesus People is:

"Don't you know that you are the temple of God, and the Holy Spirit dwells inside of you?" (1 Corinthians 3.16)

Friends, Jesus didn't just rinse us off a little bit the way you rinse off a dish before you put it in the dishwasher...where the real washing takes place. We have been born again. He has made us brand new;

"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Corinthians 5.17).

See the key there is the statement "IN Christ." If anyone is "IN Christ, he is a new creation."

Not only are we IN Christ, but as Paul says in Galatians 2.20, Christ is IN us.

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me"

You are in Christ and Christ is in you.

Religion will settle for you being "around" Christ, but the minute you begin to get the revelation that you are one with God, and by way of that union, you are now righteous and holy, the spirit of religion knows it's lost its power to control you.

Paul talks about the gospel as a mystery, something hidden from previous generations. The mystery hidden for ages was not that a Savior would come to save us, the old testament prophets knew that. The mystery of the new covenant is that the Savior would come to live inside us, to take up residence and dwell, not just *with* man, but IN man.

You are the temple not made with human hands.

Consider that for a minute. Paul makes an absolutely astounding claim in **1 Corinthians 3.16**,

“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Holy Spirit of God dwells in you.”

Under the old covenant, the temple was the place where God’s presence rested among His people. And the holy of holies, the place where God dwelled, was totally off limits - except for once a year when the high priest had permission to enter. And when the high priest did enter in, it was such a dangerous thing that they would literally tie a rope around his waist in case he fell over dead when he entered the presence of God...so at least they could pull him out.

And now, according to **1 Corinthians 3.16**, that same presence that could only be entered into once a year by one consecrated man is our new covenant inheritance. If you are in Christ, you are not unclean, you are the righteousness of God and the dwelling place of the living, burning, all consuming, fiery presence of the uncreated, beautiful, all powerful Holy Spirit of God.

You are the righteousness of God and the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit.

POINT 1: It is illegal for you to think something about yourself that Jesus doesn't think about you.

POINT 2: Being righteous and holy is *not* what religion has told you it is.

Most of us have been taught that *holy* means to be without sin and *righteous* means to be in right standing with God.

So what are we saying when we say that God is holy and righteous? Are we saying that He is without sin and in right standing with Himself? That's nonsense...the bible says He can't even be tempted with evil. Saying that God is holy doesn't compliment Him if what we mean is He resisted something that He wasn't even tempted to do.

Holy means to be distinct, separate, all together different than any other. So when God says to us "be holy as I am holy" (1 Peter 1.16) He's not saying 'never sin as I have never sinned.' He's saying choose to be as distinct as I am. When Colossians 3.12 says that we are "chosen by God, holy and beloved" it means that, in Christ, we are now of a unique and distinct kind, just as He is totally distinct.

That's what it means to be holy.

To live holy means that we refuse anything that would contaminate our distinction.

Most of us have this backward. We think the way we live determines who we are. That's putting the cart before the horse. In the kingdom, who we are in Christ enables us to live like Someone who resisted every temptation known to man. When we know that we are holy in Christ, then our lives will bear the fruit of holiness and bring glory to the God who says we are holy. So I don't not sin so I don't go to hell. I don't sin because I don't want to do anything that causes me to no longer be distinct. I don't sin because I don't dare contradict the identity that God speaks over me.

Let's talk about sin and the believer for a minute.

Think of it this way; for the holy, beloved, chosen child of God to sin is tantamount to a whale washing itself up on the beach. Can it happen? Yes. But how do we react when a perfectly healthy whale allows itself to wash up on shore? People are stunned. News crews come to tell the story. The entire community is talking about it. It's shocking because it's completely contrary to the whale's internal nature. It's suicidal.

That's what sin is like for the born again believer who God now says is holy.

The way we react to the beached whale is the way heaven reacts to the believer who sins.

The Greek word for sin is ha-martia. Hamartia means to be distorted and broken in your identity. Sin is to be out of alignment with the original design that God intended for you. We were taught that sin is bad moral behavior...doing things that are contrary to God's

law. That's partially correct...but that's step two. Bad moral behavior is actually the fruit of the root issue, which is you and I living out of sync with how God designed us. The bad moral behavior is actually supposed to serve as an announcement that you are out of step with how the Father has designed you, which should then bring you back into alignment with who the Father says you are.

The beached whale has sinned in that it has acted out of harmony with how God designed it to live. We sin by first not knowing who we are and then by acting out of that distorted identity. Then, sin lies to us and tries to re-identify us as sinners;

"because of what you've done, you're a sinner."

Really? Because what I do doesn't make me saved...I'm saved because of what Jesus *did*. I'm a son because of what Jesus *did*.

For anyone who is "*in Christ*" to believe for a second that their identity is "sinner" makes as much sense as telling the beached whale "because of what you've done you're now a school bus." It's completely contrary to what God says about you. If you are in Christ, sin does not re-identify you as a sinner any more than lying on the beach re-identifies the whale as a sunbather.

But hear me now, this is important. This doesn't mean we disregard and tolerate sin. Like Paul says in [Romans 6.1](#),

"Shall we go on sinning so that grace may abound? God forbid! We have died to sin, how can we live in it any longer?"

The result of continuing in sin IS death, make no mistake about it. If that beached whale doesn't get back in its natural habitat it will die. This is where repentance comes in. Repentance is, remember, first changing the way you think at such a core level that you then change the direction you're moving in.

So somebody remind that whale that it's a whale. Get it back into its natural environment. In the same way, somebody remind that born again child of God that they are washed in

the blood of the Lamb...get that saint back into its natural habitat...“In Him we live and move and have our being”.

So, to reduce holiness to simply being the absence of sin is to miss the beauty of holiness all together. When God says we are holy, He is saying we are distinct just as He is distinct. And because we are distinct, we don't do anything that would dilute the uniqueness of who God says we are.

So let's talk about righteousness. What does Righteousness mean?

Righteousness is the condition of one who is as He ought to be. So if:

sin is to be out of alignment with how you are designed,

righteousness means to be in alignment with how you are designed.

When God says that you are now righteous, it means that you are now restored back to His **Genesis 1.26** design,

"Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness."

So being the righteousness of God means that God looks at you and says "you remind of Me."

Contrary to what most of us think, you can't grow in righteousness. Righteous is something you either are or are not. And if you are in Christ, then according to **1 Corinthians 1.30** and **2 Corinthians 5.21**, the righteousness of Christ has been transferred to you. We can grow in our understanding of righteousness...and we should. But you can't become more of something that God says you already are. Righteousness is an imputation, or a transfer, not a process. Righteousness is transferred to us on the basis of faith. For example, **Romans 4.3**;

"Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."

Faith was the gate that opened up the transfer of righteousness from God to Abraham.

If a billionaire tells you, "I'm going to give you a million dollars...give me your banking information", what are you expecting to see tomorrow when you look in your account? A million dollars.

If you found that the billionaire had only transferred \$100, you would be disappointed. So you get a hold of the billionaire and you say, "Thank you for the \$100, but you said you would give me \$1million." Then the billionaire tells you, "I will. I will give you \$100 every day for the rest of your life so that at the end of your life you will have \$1million."

That's how most of us think righteousness works. We think we received the seed of righteousness that then grows into the oak of righteousness as we successfully navigate our way through sanctification the rest of our lives. That may be an accurate picture of growing in maturity, which is very important, but that is not how righteousness works. It was faith that put righteousness in Abraham's account in one transaction, not a succession of days where he did more good stuff than bad stuff. Listen to the rest of what Paul says about Abraham in **Romans 4**. This is **v22-25**;

"Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness. Now this was not written for Abraham's sake alone that righteousness was imputed to him, but also for us. Righteousness shall also be imputed TO US who believe in Him who raised Jesus from the dead."

Do you believe in Him who raised Jesus from the dead? Then His righteousness is now your righteousness.

Think of it this way; when you believed in Jesus, did you receive a little salvation? Of course not...just like you didn't receive a little sonship from your parents when you were born? You can grow in your understanding of what it means to be a son, and as you mature you act more like a mature son, but that's a result of growing in understanding, not growing in sonship. As a son who honors my father, I have learned over the years who he is, what he likes, what he doesn't like; and I act in ways that agree with my identity as my father's son. But that doesn't make me more of a son now than I was when I was born. It just means I've learned the culture that my father has established in our family, and I've learned how to act in alignment with my identity as a son.

1 Peter 2.24 ties this together nicely;

"Because Christ bore our sins in His own body we have died to sin and now live for righteousness."

We died to the distorted lie and now live to the original design.

Why is it so important that we understand these things?

POINT 3: Knowing we are righteous heals our brokenness and makes us whole

I want to flesh out the statement I made at the beginning of the message; how you reacted to me saying "you are as righteous and holy and Jesus" is an indicator of how whole you are.

Listen to what Paul writes in **Romans 4.6** (TPT);

"Even King David speaks to us regarding the blessing/total happiness/complete wholeness that comes inside a person when God's powerful declaration of righteousness is heard over their life."

The moment you believed in Him who raised Jesus from the dead, God released a powerful declaration over you; "This one is now righteous!"

That declaration of righteousness is intended to lead you from your old broken life of sin and separation from God into complete wholeness in Christ.

-Complete wholeness doesn't come to you when you die and go to heaven in a glorified body.

-Complete wholeness doesn't come as a result of discipline and self-effort...we don't fast and pray our way into wholeness.

-Complete wholeness doesn't come as a result of binding and loosing and figuring out what level of masonry is sticking to you because of generational curses in your family tree.

God intends for complete wholeness to come to you when you hear God tell you who you are.

Wholeness is intended to be the starting point, not the finish line.

If you are broken today, hear God's powerful declaration over those who are in Christ. Jesus became a curse for you so that you could come alive. And the first thing He intends for you to hear is, "You remind Me so much of Me...righteous...holy."

If you're broken today, then know that He is near to the broken (**Psalm 34.18**), but He's not near just to leave you broken. He comes near to make you whole.

This is massively important, not just for your own life and relationship with God, but because the answer for a broken world is not just a God who is righteous and holy, but a *PEOPLE* who are now righteous and holy...and whole.

God intends to show the world that He is so holy He takes dirty, broken, lost, law breaking, dead sinners, who were once enemies of God and makes them holy, too. THAT'S how holy He is. He intends for the world to know that He is so holy that anything He comes in contact with becomes holy.

We understand that about the ground underneath the burning bush...we have no problem with the dirt underneath Moses' feet being holy, but God wants the world to see what He does with dirty people, not just patches of dirt. God has determined that the world will see Him that way when the people who are called by His name actually know who they are.