



GLOBAL GRACE NETWORK

GGN is a fellowship of ministers and churches that advocate the gospel of the grace of Jesus Christ – Jesus alone, grace alone, faith alone. Our purpose is twofold: to help the church rediscover Jesus and to take this message to the world.

AUGUST 2008

# JESUS —OUR Righteousness

Sometimes people laugh and shake their heads when we ask, who is most righteous - them or Jesus? “Of course, it’s Jesus!” many will reply. However, the very core of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is this: Jesus has now become our righteousness, and that means we have the same righteousness with God as Jesus has!

What a joy to share such tremendous good news; news that removes guilt and condemnation and transforms people’s lives. This month’s newsletter is all about Jesus being our righteousness. Let’s study the teachings and together discover even more sides of this powerful truth.

A section of questions and answers is also included, as well as a short outline from this month’s topic. We will also get acquainted with a Pastor from India and see how Jesus changed his life, family and ministry.

Our dream is that Global Grace Network will be a channel of inspiration to rediscover Jesus and bring this message to the world. You have an important part in this, and we pray for you.



Mary Felde  
Editor

# Righteousness is a GIFT

BY PETER YOUNGREN

THE ONLY RIGHTEOUSNESS WORTH ANYTHING IS JESUS’ OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND WE RECEIVE IT AS A FREE GIFT.

**T**o many the word “righteousness” seems intimidating, something they seek to obtain, but no matter how hard they try it seems righteousness remains elusive. This struggle leads to a feeling of inability, inferiority and hopelessness, and it causes sincere believers to wonder if the Christian life really works. When we discover the New Covenant and the finished work of Jesus Christ at the cross, righteousness becomes a very positive word, because we recognize that the only righteousness worth anything is Jesus’ own righteousness, and we receive it as a free gift.

Without an unshakable assurance of

Christ’s righteousness imputed to us by faith, we will never have the power to live the Christian life, or the boldness to move in the supernatural power of God. The assurance of Christ’s righteousness in us causes us to grow up from being spiritual babies to mature believers. The Hebrew writer tells us that if we are “unskilled in the word of righteousness” we are spiritual babies (Hebrews 5:13), meaning that true spiritual maturity is found in discovering the word of Christ’s righteousness.

### ONLY GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS

Because God is perfectly righteous He cannot accept anything less. This poses a potential problem. On the one side God desires fellowship with us, but that

fellowship will be tainted due to the fact that our best attempts at righteousness are but “filthy rags.” Here is the dilemma - God loves people yet He hates unrighteousness. How then can God have fellowship with the creation He loves? By imputing His own righteousness into us. The good news is that Jesus’ righteousness is ours by faith. This is why the Bible calls us “saints”, “just”, “faultless”, “without spot or wrinkle”, and “without reproach.” When we believe what God says about us and apply those descriptions to ourselves, we are not boasting in ourselves, but in Jesus, who lives in us.

Paul writes that we “become the righteousness of God in Jesus.” (2 Corinthians 5:21) John states that Jesus, the righteous One, is at the right hand of the Father interceding for us. (1 John 2:1) Here we see that righteousness is a person, Jesus Himself. (1 Corinthians 1:30) All these statements about how we are righteous now hinge on Jesus’ death on the cross, where He took our debt of sin and nailed it to the cross. This had a twofold effect: first our slate was clean, and secondly “principalities and powers” were disarmed and “made a public spectacle of.” (Colossians 2:14-15)

How does the devil condemn you? Does he not use unrighteous thoughts and deeds that you may have done to accuse you? Do you see why Jesus’ death on the cross in one swoop removed our sins and disarmed the devil? Once you see your unrighteousness nailed to the cross, the devil has no bullets for his pistol of accusations. When you believe that your sins have been nailed to the cross and Jesus is now your righteousness, the devil is reduced to firing blanks at you.

### **THE EFFECTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**

The effects of Jesus’ righteousness imputed to us are immense. We are presented to God “holy and blameless

## **BY JESUS IMPUTING RIGHTEOUSNESS WE RECEIVE A NEW NATURE, WE ARE NOT MERELY DRESSED UP SINNERS, WE HAVE BECOME SAINTS OF GOD.**

and above reproach in His sight.” (Colossians 1:22) This does not refer to some future time; it is our current standing.

We are free from condemnation, because “It is God who justifies, who then is he who condemns. It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.” (Romans 8:34) The only one who could condemn us and declare us unworthy is Christ, but instead He has made us righteous.

*The only one who could condemn us and declare us unworthy is Christ, but instead He has made us righteous.*

Since Christ does not condemn, no condemnation is valid; we are without spot and wrinkle, holy and without blemish before God. (Ephesians 5:27) Maybe you will want to confess who God says you are. Say it out loud, “*I’m holy, blameless and above approach in the sight of God. Jesus’ death has justified me, and I am free from condemnation.*”

### **BEAT UP ON SIN**

What is our foundation? The Gospel! Paul writes about the Gospel, “For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, the just shall live by faith.” (Romans 1:17) God’s anger at sin was revealed at the cross, where God did what He had wanted to do all along: He beat up on sin. God punished sin once and for all, and that

punishment, which we deserved, fell on the flesh of Jesus. God imputes His righteousness to our account, on the basis that our sins have been paid, which clears the way for us to be declared righteous.

### **THE BENEFITS OF CHRIST’S FINISHED WORK**

God demonstrated His righteousness, “because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at this present time His righteousness.” (Romans 3:21-26) God doesn’t treat sin lightly; no, He gave sin a most severe punishment. Before the cross God had “forbearance” and “passed over sins.” There are many instances in the Old Testament when various people should have been punished for their sins, but God overlooked it knowing that the final payment for sin would be made through Christ. Now we look back at the full payment that has been made on our behalf, and we enjoy the benefits of Christ’s finished work.

#### **1. Our prayers avail**

It’s not the fervent prayers that avail much, but the “effective fervent prayer of a righteous person.” (James 5:16) As long as you pray looking at your own righteousness your prayers will be ineffective. Such prayers are counter-productive and position you in a place where God cannot show His kindness to you. On the contrary, when your prayers are based on believing that Jesus has made you righteous, they avail much.

#### **2. We are freed from self-effort**

Once we recognize that Jesus is our righteousness any religious acts or



spiritual efforts to please God become redundant and ridiculous.

### 3. We have a new identity

We are new creations in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17), all things have become new. We are not merely renovated human beings, we have become partakers of divine nature; we are a new kind of person. Every being has a nature after its own kind whether bird, fish, cat or dog. We could pretend that a bird has fish nature and immerse into water, but it would quickly become clear that all of our good intentions would not bear fruit. You could pretend that a dairy cow is a racehorse, saddle it, and do all the proper training exercises, but you will find out that the cow still has a cow's nature and a cow's abilities. Similarly we can dress up a sinner in choir robes, put a hymnbook and a Bible in his hands, and make him speak Christian words, but if the nature has never been transformed our effort would be futile. By Jesus imputing righteousness we receive a new nature; we are not merely dressed up sinners, we have become saints of God.

### 4. We have victory over sin

Romans chapter 7 gives a graphic description of a person married to his own self-effort, the law, trying to overcome sin by performing good deeds. In spite of good intentions he fails, becomes frustrated, and exclaims "oh wretched man that I am." In Romans chapter 8 we find a person married to

Christ. Both the law and Christ are holy, just and perfect, but the law is powerless, while Christ is full of power.

### 5. We are secure

We are secure in Jesus because "if anyone sins we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (1 John 2:1) Your failures do not alter Jesus' righteousness. Often people ask, "Well Pastor Peter what if I sin, what if I fail, what then?" Well, if that happens, it's still none of the devil's business and the sin is not more powerful than what Jesus did on the cross. Imagine a pair of scales in front of you, on the one side are your sinful deeds and on the other Jesus'

Christian may find himself surrounded by failure and defeat, but the righteousness nature in the believer causes him to rise again. Remember that nothing can shake or alter what Jesus has done for you, as long as you believe it; His righteousness is foolproof and failure proof.

### 6. We are empowered

Some suggest that by teaching about righteousness as a gift, people are encouraged to live a sinful life. Not at all! Actually, this reasoning is both ridiculous and illogical. How would an increased awareness of your new righteous nature make you sin more? In fact, this is the only cure for sin. Religion teaches that

THE LEGALISTIC PERSON IS SEEKING TO BE HOLY IN ORDER TO PLEASE GOD, WHILE THE GOSPEL BELIEVER LIVES HOLY BECAUSE HE HAS RECEIVED THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD AS A FREE GIFT.

you need to clean up your act, crucify your flesh, and deal with sin in your life in order for God's blessing to flow. The gospel teaches the opposite. Receive the free gift of God's righteousness and His blessing and "you will not fulfil the lust of the flesh." (Galatians 5:16) Often the gospel believer and the legalistic

person have similar moral convictions. Both groups believe that lying, stealing, adultery, etc. are wrong, but the reasons for pursuing holiness vastly differ. The legalistic person is seeking to be holy in order to please God, while the gospel believer lives holy because he has received the righteousness of God as a free gift.

death on the cross. Which one tips the scale? What Jesus did is infinitely more powerful than any failure of ours. No wonder Solomon wrote, "For a righteous man may fall seven times and rise again, but the wicked shall fall by calamity." (Proverbs 24:16) Notice that the one who has become righteous may fall. It doesn't say that you have to fall because we can enjoy victory over sin, but it may happen, and if it happens you will "rise again." The person with Christ's righteousness has an inward nature that causes him to rise again. Put an eagle

among the barnyard chickens, and the eagle will still mount its wings and soar because that's the nature of the eagle. A

The legalistic person is seeking to be holy in order to please God, while the gospel believer lives holy because he has received the righteousness of God as a free gift.

The gospel believer lives out who he is on the inside, while the legalist seeks to become something he is not. We live righteous because we have received Christ's righteousness.



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By Pastor Åge Åleskjær

# Your New Consciousness of RIGHTEOUSNESS

IT'S TIME TO MOVE OUT OF A CONSCIOUSNESS OF SIN AND INSTEAD MOVE INTO A CONSCIOUSNESS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

**T**he Gospel is a revelation about the righteousness of God as a gift. Romans states: "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, ... For in it the righteousness of God is revealed..." (Romans 1:16-17)

The whole letter continues to show forth this truth: "But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through the faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe." (Romans 3:21-22)

It is when we wake up to this truth that we are able to move out of a consciousness of sin and instead move into a consciousness of righteousness. Hebrews 10:2 tells us to stop being focused on sin and to stop having a sin consciousness because of the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ by which he cleansed us once and for all. A study of Hebrews 9:26 and 10 verses 10, 12, 14 and 17 establishes that with one sacrifice our High Priest has solved the sin problem forever and ever!

The day you realize this, your faith will be released and your boldness towards God, man and devils will go through the roof. You will enter into the rest of faith, which Hebrews 4 is talking about.

Righteousness is the ability to stand in the presence of God without any sense of fear, guilt, shame or inferiority, as if sin never existed! Then we can look up at Him and be radiant, and our faces are not blushing with shame.

*Righteousness is the ability to stand in the presence of God without any sense of fear, guilt, shame or inferiority, as if sin never existed!*

## THE MIRACLE OF REDEMPTION

It is God Himself who has done this. What happened on the cross was that God in Christ reconciled the world to Himself. "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Corinthians 5:21)

How is it possible for us to have God's righteousness without doing righteous deeds? The answer is: In the same way as it was possible for Jesus to become sin without sinning!

If you see this, then the light of the Gospel, that which shines if the face of Jesus Christ, will shine for you.

Everything is finished. All we have to do is to say thanks and receive. Grace has been revealed unto salvation for all men. God has in Christ saved the whole world, but as many as receives Him are born again and experience the miracle of salvation. We have to respond to the grace of God by saying YES to Christ Jesus and confess Him as the Resurrected Lord.

## HEIRS OF THE WORLD

As descendants of Abraham we are heirs of the world. It was not through the law the descendants of Abraham became heirs of the world, but through the righteousness of faith. (Romans 4: 13-14)

If we study these verses carefully we will surely be surprised! Many think that it is sin that makes the promises of no effect and makes faith void. However, verse 14 shows that it is THE LAW that hinders faith and makes the promises of no effect. This is because the law creates consciousness of sin.

However, by looking unto Christ Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, our consciousness will

move from sin to righteousness, because Jesus Christ is now our righteousness! This is why Romans 7:4-6 explains that we are now dead from our old husband, the law, and in the new covenant we belong to Christ. As New Testament Christians we must not flirt with our old husband, the law, for it prevents the glory from flowing.

*By looking unto Christ Jesus, our consciousness will move from sin to righteousness, because Jesus Christ is now our righteousness!*

## REIGN IN LIFE

"Those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:17)

Because there is no condemnation for the one that is in Christ Jesus, the law of the Spirit of life can take over dominion. The law of the Spirit of life has made us free from the law of sin and death.

The body of Christ will take its position and its heritage by seeing itself free from all condemnation by the sight of Christ, He that is our righteousness. He sits at the right hand of the Father, and John 2:1-2 explains that He Himself, the Righteous, is the solution to the sin problem.

Jesus Himself said in John 16:10 that the Spirit would convince about righteousness because He went to the Father. Now He is there, and the Spirit convinces us about our righteousness in Him!



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# Get CoNNected

**To connect** to this fellowship of ministers and Churches that advocate the gospel of the grace of Jesus Christ, you may register here: [www.GlobalGraceNetwork.org/register](http://www.GlobalGraceNetwork.org/register)

The purpose of GGN is twofold: to help the church rediscover Jesus and to take this message to the world. For more information about GGN read the question and answer section of the Annual Newsletter 2008. [www.GlobalGraceNetwork.org/network](http://www.GlobalGraceNetwork.org/network)

When ministers and pastors register their membership, there is an annual fee of USD \$60.

Some of you might live in a nation facing financial or political disadvantages, thus making it hard to meet with a full annual

**Welcome** to each one of you that registered as members in July. We greatly rejoice at the opportunity to stay connected with you, and together we will take the Good News to the world!

fee. You may then choose a subsidized membership, equal in level, value and importance. The annual fee of a subsidized membership is USD \$10.

When Churches register their membership, there is a one time fee of USD \$150. The Church will receive a decorative plaque that identifies the Church and ministry as a part of GGN.

GGN's statement of faith is found in the Annual Newsletter of 2008.

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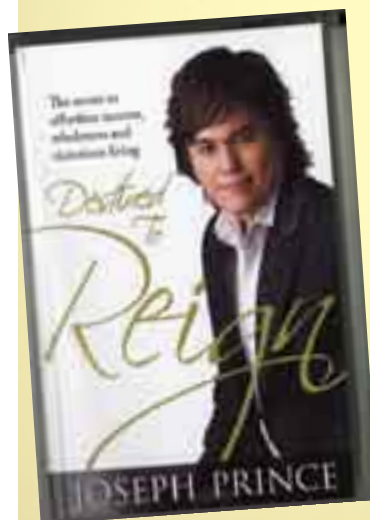
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## STUDY CORNER

LET'S DIG DEEPER...

Web sites with recommended books, CDs, DVDs and/or daily devotionals for further study:



[www.MyCelebrationMinistries.com](http://www.MyCelebrationMinistries.com) (Peter Youngren)

[www.NewCreationChurch.org](http://www.NewCreationChurch.org) (Joseph Prince)

[www.GraceWalk.org](http://www.GraceWalk.org) (Melanie and Steve McVey)

[www.PeterWade.com](http://www.PeterWade.com) (Peter Wade)





BY MARY FELDE

### **Can I grow in righteousness?**

No, you cannot grow in the God kind of righteousness. However, you can grow in the *understanding* of this righteousness, and that is what Hebrews 5:13 says makes us mature as Christians.

### **Will I be more righteous in heaven than I am right here and now?**

No, you are just as righteous now as you will be in heaven. You are already perfectly righteous. When you die you just move from your body to heaven, and later you will receive a new heavenly body. However, your spirit and your right standing with God is already new and perfect, and will remain the same in heaven.

### **Can a person lose his righteousness?**

We never received righteousness by our works or lifestyle, but only through grace by faith in Jesus. In the same way we can never lose our righteousness based on our works or lifestyle. Because we have *Jesus* we are completely righteous to

God. This important truth helps to bring people into assurance of salvation.

### **I understand that righteousness is a gift from God, and that a person will not lose his righteousness if he sins. However, if a person sins, will the righteousness get some "dark spots?"**

Does Jesus ever get some "dark spots" on His righteousness? Since *He* is your righteousness, your righteousness will never get any "dark spots", even if you commit a sin. (1 Corinthians 1:30, Romans 8:33-34)

### **Will not teaching with a strong focus on grace and righteousness lead people to sin more?**

No, these truths will not set people free *to* sin but rather set people free *from* a lifestyle of sin. (Romans 5:17, 2 Corinthians 3:9) It will not lead people to

sin *more* but to sin *less*. More about this question is found in the teaching articles.

### **As Christians, are we forgiven sinners?**

No. This may be a surprising answer to some, so let's look at it a bit more. According to Romans 5:19 we all became sinners because of one man's sin (Adam), and we become righteous through one man's obedience (Jesus). When we got born again the old man (the sinner) died and the new man (the righteous new creation) was born. We are now called saints and righteous, and not sinners.

Who are then forgiven sinners, since it is not the Church? It is all the people in the world, not yet being born again. What a wonderful message we have to them: "YOU ARE ALREADY FORGIVEN BY GOD! Jesus has already paid the full price for your sins too, no matter what you have done! Will you now receive Him as your Savior and receive the gift of righteousness and a brand new life from Him?"



# Topic: RIGHTEOUSNESS

Text:  
2 CORINTHIANS 5:21  
& ROMANS 10:1-3

## Definition of Righteousness

- ✓ Right standing with God
- ✓ The ability to stand in the Presence of the Father without any sense of fear, guilt, shame or inferiority
- ✓ To stand in the Presence of the Father as if sin never has existed

## Introduction

Let's mention three persons that are/were **100%** righteous before God, according to our definition:

### 1. Adam (*before the fall*)

He had never done anything wrong nor said anything wrong. Imagine what it would feel like to be him; confident, joyful, no fear of failure.

### 2. Jesus

He had never done anything wrong; there was absolutely no sin in him (except when he carried *our* sins on the cross) Imagine what it would feel like to be Him; confident, joyful, knowing that God always heard Him.

### 3. YOU!

Maybe some say, but I have sinned, I'm not perfect, so don't

compare me with Jesus!

However, if we have received Jesus Christ then we *are* 100% righteous, for Jesus is our righteousness.

Some may misunderstand what it means to be righteous and how righteousness is achieved. We will therefore study about the two different kinds of righteousness.

## A—There are two kinds of righteousness

(Rom. 10:1-3; Phil. 3:8-9)

### 1. Self-righteousness

Based on us; *our* good works and *our* right living

We are not perfect; we can increase (and decrease) in this kind of righteousness: 50%, 90%, 85%....

Our self-righteousness will never be good enough to qualify us (Rom. 3:9-10; Isa. 64:6)

### 2. God's righteousness

Based on God/Jesus; *His* good works and *His* right living

God is perfect; His righteousness cannot grow. It's always perfect, always 100%. Only this kind of righteousness can qualify us.

*We never come to God based on our self-righteousness* (like the older son in Luke 15), *but based on God's righteousness given to us as a free gift*. This righteousness is Jesus. (1 Cor. 1:30)

## B—Our sinful nature has been exchanged with God's righteous nature

### 1. Swapping of positions (2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 5:19)

He took our place on the cross (all our sins and our sinful nature) So we could have His place (no sins at all, God's Righteous nature)

This exchange is to be *born again*

### 2. We are a new creation

Our past is gone, and we are brand new (2 Cor. 5:17)

### 3. Our sins are forgiven and erased

Even when we're in heaven God doesn't remember our sins! (Isa. 43:25)

God doesn't count our sins today! He doesn't keep a list of them. (2 Cor. 5:19)

Example: If there were a video/book in heaven about your life, then all your sins were erased! No shame!

## C—How God's Righteousness is achieved

### 1. It's received as a free gift in salvation, by faith in Jesus and confession of Him as Lord (Rom. 5:17; 3:22; 10:10)

## Conclusion

Know that you are the same 100% righteous as Jesus. This brings a great thankfulness and a great change in your life.

*You are 100% righteous to God!*



# ENJOYING *the freedom and joy* IN CHRIST

## IT WAS A PROCESS FOR ME TO UNDERSTAND THE MESSAGE OF GRACE, BUT NOW I AM TOTALLY CONVINCED.

**H**ere I am, Pastor William Cary. I was born in a Christian family, went to Church regularly irregular, and was a very stubborn and disobedient child to my uneducated parents. Born in remote areas of Kalisapudi of West Godavari, Andhra Pradesh, I studied up to 12th Standard. I became an atheist telling my friends that there was no God, because if there was a God why is there injustice, why is there poverty and inequality, and why should I suffer with this kind of suffering. So I joined those extreme groups living away from God the Creator.

### INSTANTLY HEALED

My mother was a good believer, and she used to pray for me regularly and advise me to come to Church and pray to Jesus. "He will save you from every problem, poverty and sickness and He is the only way." But I never listened to her words.



One day when I went to my bed as usual I suddenly got a great pain in my chest - unbearable. I didn't know what to do but suddenly remembered my mother's words: "Whenever you are in trouble pray to Jesus. He is the very present help in trouble." So I prayed to Jesus: "If you are a real God then save me from this terrible pain and I will serve you throughout my life." Instantly God heard my prayer and the pain was completely gone. Praise to Jesus!

### THE CHURCH WAS BORN

From that time onward inner change started and the

desire to serve the Lord was increasing in my heart. I made a decision to go to Bible College, so I packed all my things and landed up in Hyderabad with only a little money. By the grace of God I successfully completed the Bible training course, and I was looking for placement in the ministry. God spoke to me in a vision that I should start a Church in Tarnaka, Hyderabad. In obedience to God's call the Church was started and it increased day by day.

In the year 1996 I married Hepshibha Bahanumathi who comes from a Hindu Brahmin background. She became a great help in the ministry. We were blessed with three boys: Paul, Stewart, and Peter.

### THE FIRST YEARS OF THE MINISTRY

In the beginning days of the ministry I was so pious for the Lord; fasting and praying for 40 days and 21 days, teaching and preaching. Legalism and condemnation messages were plentiful with all the hard work and good works to be done. However, the Church was not growing to expectations, so I was disappointed and discouraged and didn't know what to do.

Praise be to God, the Spirit of God convinced me about the grace of God, and I started preaching and practicing grace messages. Then I could see the change in my own life, in our marriage, in the life of the Church and in the ministry.

### THE NEW BEGINNING

When we started to understand and preach the gospel about God's grace we started to see new people come to the Church every week. So many have received a new life! Many of us had never heard this message before. We had been under condemnation and sin consciousness and had always struggled with guilt. We had not been able to experience the freedom and joy that is in the faith in Jesus. But now we have so much freedom and we know that God has a special love for us. Before we always preached about how we had to love God but seldom about how much God loves us.



We also have many testimonies about how the Lord has healed relationships and families after they heard the message about the grace of God. The Church has grown in number, spiritually and also financially. We are so grateful to those who have come and helped us to understand more about God's love and grace.

*Pastor William Cary,  
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*Today Aeon  
Church has  
several Churches  
in Hyderabad and  
more than one  
hundred Churches  
in villages in Andhra  
Pradesh.*

- Editor's note

