

# Matthew 6:33

- But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

# My personal goals in Malawi

- Explain righteousness in an easy to understand way / Keep it simple!
- Back it up with Scripture
- Encourage people to strive for righteousness
- Have fun / remember to smile

# 1 Timothy 6:11

- But as for you, man of God, shun all this; pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness.

# 2 Timothy 2:22

- Shun youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

# 2 Timothy 3:16

- All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,

# Definition of Righteousness

- Oxford Dictionary = The quality of being morally right or justifiable
- Strongs = To be or make right in a moral or forensic sense.
- Justifiable = Able to be shown to be right; defensible
- Forensic = in open court; public (see forum)

# The 2 types of Righteousness

- Righteousness by works
- Righteousness by Faith

# The works of Righteousness

- It has also been called:
- Active Righteousness
- Righteousness of Law
- The Righteousness of character
- The Righteousness of works
- And more...

# Psalms 11:7

- For the Lord is righteous;  
he loves righteous deeds;  
the upright shall behold his face.

# Zephaniah 3:5

- The Lord within it is righteous (context = city of Jerusalem);  
    he does no wrong.

# Deuteronomy 28:1-14

- Blessings for Obedience
- If you will only obey the Lord your God, by diligently observing all his commandments that I am commanding you today...
- Blessed shall you be...
- City / field / womb / fruit / livestock / basket / bowl / coming & going / against enemies...

# Psalm 119:172

- My tongue will sing of your promise,  
for all your commandments are right.
- (KJV = righteousness)
- OT vibe: God is righteous so if you obey Him then you too will be righteous.
- Even Jesus said to a rich young man in Matthew 19:17 – “If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments.”

# Leviticus 19:2

- Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them: You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.

# Sounds pretty straight forward

- Joshua 24:24 – The people said to Joshua “The Lord our God we will serve, and Him we will obey.”

# Titus 2:7

- Show yourself in all respects a model of good works and in your teaching show integrity, gravity (respect and honesty) and sound speech.

# We run into a few problems

- The Israelites broke the covenant.
- They couldn't drive out the inhabitants of the promised land.
- Judges 2:2 – “you have not obeyed my command.” – (within 2 chapters).
- Inhabitants = Type for sin.
- Promised land = Type for our bodies.

# The law was unachievable

- James 2:10 - For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.
- 1 John 3:4 - Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.
- Romans 3:23 - since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God;

# Isaiah 64:6

- We have all become like one who is unclean,  
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy  
cloth.  
We all fade like a leaf,  
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

# Righteous works will always be tainted by sin

- Ezekiel 33:12 – The righteousness of the righteous shall not save them when they transgress.

# Romans 3:10

- as it is written:

“There is no one who is righteous, not even one;

# Other problems

- The Israelites (the church) had become good at appearing to be righteous.
- They had become too reliant on their works; they had become self-righteous.

# The appearance of righteousness

- Matthew 23:27-28 - Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which on the outside look beautiful, but inside they are full of the bones of the dead and of all kinds of filth. So you also on the outside look righteous to others, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

# Matthew 5:20

- For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

# Isaiah 57:12

- I will concede (declare) your righteousness and your works, but they will not help you.
- Isaiah Chapter 58 helps with the context:
- Announce to my people their rebellion.
- Day after day they seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that practised righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of the God.

# Self-Righteousness

- Ezekiel 33:13 – Though I say to the righteous that they shall surely live, yet if they trust in their righteousness and commit iniquity, none of their righteous deeds shall be remembered.

# Luke 18:11

- The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.'

# Job 32:1

- So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes.
- Job 27:6 – I hold fast my righteousness, and will not let it go.
- Job Chapter 35 (Elihu, who was not admonished by God)
- If you have sinned, what do you accomplish against Him?
- If you are righteous, what do you give to Him?

# Conclusion

- There is nothing wrong with seeking righteousness through good works.
- Titus 3:8 – Those who have come to believe in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works; these things are excellent and profitable to everyone.

# However...

- Problems arise when we begin to rely on these works to justify us, even save us.
- Romans 9:31-32 – Israel who did strive for the righteousness that is based on the law, did not succeed in fulfilling that law.
- Why not? Because they did not strive for it on the basis of faith, but as if it were based on works...

# Righteousness by Faith

- This is not just a New Testament concept – it is also taught in the Old Testament.
- The Jews simply missed it but the clues were always there, right in front of them.

# Habakkuk 2:4

- Look at the proud!  
Their spirit is not right in them,  
but the righteous live by their faith.

# Psalm 37:39

- The salvation of the righteous is from the Lord;  
he is their refuge in the time of trouble.

# Example of Abraham

- Abraham displayed faith and was considered righteous.
- Galations 3:6 – Abraham believed and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.

# The correct order of things

- After being called righteous, Abraham was then put to the test.
- He took his promised son Isaac to Mount Moriah.
- Ready to obey, Abraham was asked to stop.
- Faith came first, righteousness, then that righteousness was put to the test.

# Abraham was asked to stop

- And instead sacrifice a ram caught in a bush.
- James 2:22 – Faith was active along with his works.

# Jeremiah 23:6

- In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: “The Lord is our righteousness.”
- OT prophecy concerning Jesus.

# Jesus was asked to do the same

- Jesus was asked to sacrifice his own life.
- Phillipians 2:8 – He (Jesus) humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross.

# Jesus our righteousness

- Phillipians 3:4-9 - If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more ... as to righteousness under the law, blameless.
- Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ ... **not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith.**

# 1 Corinthians 1:30

- He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

# Jesus is the answer

- Jesus was the only one able to obtain “true righteousness” by living a sinless life.
- 2 Corinthians 5:21 - For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

# Jesus is the answer

- 1 Peter 2:24 - He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

# Jesus makes us righteous

- Jesus has been declared righteous.
- His death has been used as a means to make us righteous to God.
- By Faith in the sacrifice of Jesus, we too can share in his righteousness.
- Like the Passover, God overlooks our sin and declares us righteous.

# Romans 5:18-21

- Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so **one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all.** For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the **one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.** But law came in, with the result that the trespass multiplied; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, just as sin exercised dominion in death, so grace might also exercise dominion through justification **leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

# Righteousness = Faith and works

- Now our righteous works have their place.
- Faith first, thanks to Jesus, we are declared righteous.
- Like Abraham, we must now show our faith and our righteousness through our good works.
- James 2:26 – Faith without works is dead.

# Ultimate righteousness

- Psalms 37:29 - The righteous shall inherit the land, and live in it forever.
- 2 Timothy 4:8 - There is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

# True Righteousness = Eternal Life

- God is righteous.
- God cannot look upon sin.
- Therefore true righteousness cannot exist where sin exists.
- We must wait in hope for true righteousness.
- Daniel 9:24 - to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness...