

“THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.”

WHAT a wondrous depth of meaning there is in the thought that the vile, lost sinner should be clothed with—yes, *made*—the righteousness of God! I only know of one greater wonder than this, and that is, that God's most precious, holy Son should have been made sin, and have died the accursed death of the cross.

How very sad that this is almost forgotten in our day. It is almost forgotten that the law brought out man's sin, and proved he had no righteousness. “That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin” (Rom. iii. 19, 20). Men forget this, and still vainly try to be righteous by keeping the law. If you try to be righteous in this way, instead of finding yourself righteous, you will find that you are in the same condemnation as the devil himself.

But there is another thing *as little known*, that whilst the law proved man to be without righteousness, in the Gospel the righteousness of God is revealed. “But now *the righteousness of God* without law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; *even the righteousness of God* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference: for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, WHOM GOD HATH SET FORTH a propitiation through faith in his blood, *to declare his righteousness* for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; *to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness*; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Rom. iii. 21—26.)

Is it not greatly overlooked, that in the salvation of

lost sinners the whole transaction is of God? Man cannot do one thing, neither is he asked to do anything, but to receive, as the free gift of God, the righteousness already wrought out and accomplished by Christ. The whole thing, from beginning to end, is of God. It is not, as man would tell you, that if you keep the law and believe on Christ, then you shall be saved. No, but without law, for man cannot keep it. You cannot keep it. God has, in His own grace (because he so loved poor sinners, who were without strength to keep His law), given Christ to die for the ungodly. Christ crucified has been set forth the great propitiatory sacrifice. It was God who gave Him to die for sinners, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God. IT IS GOD, also, who gives faith to believe. IT IS GOD who justifies every sinner who does believe. IT IS GOD who shall finally glorify every sinner whom He has justified. The blood of Jesus has been shed, and IT IS GOD who has set it forth for the remission of sins. Is He not just, and the Justifier of him that believeth? All, all this vast transaction has been accomplished to declare *His righteousness* in bringing the lost sinner to Himself. I believe it. I say, fearlessly, that not only is God perfectly righteous in justifying the ungodly sinner in this His own way, but that from eternity to eternity the cross of Christ is the glory of God. Yes, when He raised our adorable Substitute from the dead, it was by the glory of the Father. Man, through sin, had sunk to the lowest depths; God, through redemption, has raised him to the highest glory. All is finished; and is not God divinely righteous? This robe of divine righteousness is "upon all them that believe."

Are you, my reader, clothed in this wedding garment? Then you shall be a happy guest in the courts above. See now that you walk with garments undefiled.

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