

Righteousness Without Works

William R. Newell
(1868-1956)

*I*f God announces the gift of righteousness apart from works, why do you keep mourning over your bad works, your failures? Do you not see that it is because you still have hopes in these works of yours that you are depressed and discouraged by their failure? If you truly saw and believed that God is reckoning righteous the ungodly who believe on Him, you would fairly hate your struggles to be “better”; for you would see that your dreams of good works have not at all commended you to God, and that your bad works do not at all hinder you from believing on Him, – that justifieth the ungodly!

Therefore, on seeing your failures, you should say, I am nothing but a failure; but God is dealing with me on another principle altogether than my works, good or bad – a principle not involving my works, but based only on the work of Christ for me ... God, in justifying me, acted wholly and only on Christ’s blood-shedding on my behalf.

Therefore I have this double attitude: first, I know that Christ is in Heaven before God for me, and that I stand in the value before God of His finished work; that God sees me nowhere else but in this dead, buried, and Risen Christ, and that His favor is toward me in Christ, and is limitless and eternal.

Then, second, toward the work of the Holy Spirit in me, my attitude is a desire to be guided into the truth, to be obedient thereto ... to walk by the Spirit, and to be filled with a love for the Scriptures and for the saints and for all men.

Yet none of these things justifies me! I had justification from God as a sinner, not as a saint! My saintliness does not increase it, nor, praise God, do my failures decrease it!

Romans, Verse By Verse
Chapter 3

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