

## Righteousness under Christ

*Scripture reading:* Romans 6:1-11

When we look at the word “sin,” we notice that it is always contrary, opposite to righteousness. If we define the nature of God as being that of righteousness, then it would follow that that which is unrighteousness (sin) is therefore the nature of the devil. So, we find that there is an opposite pole to every thought, every action, every desire, as well as every plan. What this means is that anything and everything outside of what is God/Righteousness must be sin. Now, thoughts, actions and circumstances, can be of man or of the Devil but we understand from the scriptures that anything that is not of God, that is of the flesh or of the Devil, is sin. Therefore, when we try to find out what sin is, we find that the very fact of our redemption by the Blood of Jesus Christ means that we were redeemed from sin, we were redeemed from sinning and continuing in sin. So, whatever is not of God is sin. Now, this concept brings a very, very sharp distinction. That is to say that if I should say that I am a free moral agent - I am free to think my thoughts and to do my thing and to walk as I please and to help my family and everything like that - it would mean that I would be living in sin, because I am excluding God from my environment.

Living in sin is the opposite of living in Christ. If a man obeys Christ, he is living in Christ, but how can we obey someone whom we cannot see? And how can we obey one whom we cannot hear? And how can we obey one in whom we don't believe? First of all, to obey Christ we must believe Christ - not only to believe that there is a Christ, but to believe IN Christ so that we know that every thought, every action, every plan is motivated, delivered, sent and executed by the Christ in us and not by the selfish thoughts of our own imagination. So, when it comes to the gifts of the Spirit: there is no space for imagination; there is no space for human conjecture; there is no space for our reason.

What this really means is that we become prisoners to truth and righteousness, if we can put it that way, because righteousness, therefore, is no longer just doing right things. Under the law, righteousness was doing right things. You gave to the poor, you gave your body to be burnt; basically, you sacrificed yourself for others. All that looks very good and it is, in a sense, righteousness, but in Christ it cannot be righteousness unless it is motivated by the Spirit of Christ. If, for instance, I give to the poor because I believe that the Lord said that he that giveth to the poor shall receive blessing, and I am motivated to give to the poor in order that I might receive a blessing - then it means that I am not serving God, I am serving a law of giving and receiving.

Over the radio or the television sometimes you hear the ministries that preach that “if you give you will be blessed” and how many people were blessed because they gave so and so and how when one gives so much, he receives back so much in return. I can well see Satan working with this law to capture people. It becomes a psychological trick to capture you. So, one can actually be in sin yet think that he is in righteousness.

We can see, therefore, that we must walk in righteousness, obey Christ, in order to be righteous. What is righteousness? Righteousness under the law was one thing: a set of do's and don'ts and the adherence to those rules that made you righteous. But **under Christ, righteousness is obedience to the Holy Spirit.**

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*Thought for today:* Righteousness under Christ is obedience to the Holy Spirit.