

“MAKING LIFE WORK: RIGHTEOUSNESS IS NOT A DIRTY WORD”

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Four principles we need to know about the word righteous:

1. Righteousness is not a dirty word.

It's mentioned 542 times in the Bible—78 times in Proverbs alone.

“An evil man is snared by his own sin, but a righteous one can sing and be glad.”

Proverbs 29:6

Definition of Righteous = “Right-ness” with God.

Synonyms: just, lawful, right (in character), legal, acceptable, conscientious, credible, ethical, holy, honorable, innocent, moral, noble, pure, reverent, spiritual, trustworthy, upright

Antonyms: [bad](#), [corrupt](#), [dishonest](#), [immoral](#), [unfair](#), wicked, evil

2. Righteousness is not a flashy word.

Righteousness is a heart condition that leaks out without intention or pretense.

Luke 18:9-14

Matthew 6:1

3. Righteousness is not an affordable word.

Righteousness is a gift from God through Christ Jesus.

Romans 5:17-18

Romans 4:13

Galatians 3:21

No one can become righteous by doing a bunch of good stuff.

4. Righteousness is not a negotiable word.

God sets the standard for righteousness, and His standard is absolute perfection—purity and holiness.

Matthew 6:33

Matthew 5:6

How do I become righteous? It's a life-long process...

- Understand who you are versus who God is (Romans 3:22-24)
- Hate the sin (Romans 7:18)
- Humble yourself before God (Romans 6:23)
- Accept the gift of salvation—positional righteousness (Romans 10:9-10)
- Obey God—progressive righteousness (Romans 16:26)
- Confess your sins regularly (Romans 6:6, 11)
- Seek after God with all your heart, mind, and soul (Mark 12:30)

New Testament References About Righteousness

Matthew 5:6

Blessed...will be filled.

Matthew 6:1

Righteousness is a heart matter. When righteousness works right, it comes out as gentleness, meekness, humility, and servanthood. It's about the heart.

Matthew 6:33

Seek first...His Kingdom...and what? Righteousness.

Matthew 21:32

The way of righteousness is the definition of Christianity.

Luke 18:9

Righteousness is rooted in God—not self. It's about God.

John 16:8

Holy Spirit and righteousness.

Romans 1:17, 3:22, 4:3, 4:5, 4:24; Galatians 5:5

Righteousness is rooted in faith. It's about God.

Romans 3:21, 4:5-6, 9

Righteousness isn't about following rules. It's apart from the law.

Romans 5:17-18

Righteousness is a gift from God.

Romans 5:21

Righteousness brings eternal life.

Romans 6:13, 16, 18

Obedience can be offered to God as righteousness. Sexual sin is wicked.

Romans 6:19

Righteousness and holiness go together.

Romans 6:20

Righteousness is opposite of sin.

Romans 8:10

Righteousness = Life

Romans 9:30-33; Galatians 3:21

You can't pursue righteousness and receive it. You must pursue God!

Romans 10:1-13

Only God's definition of righteousness will do.

1 Corinthians 1:30; Galatians 2:21; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 1:11; Philippians 3:1-11; 1 Peter 2:24; 2 Peter 1:1

Jesus is our righteousness.

2 Corinthians 6:14

Righteousness and wickedness are opposites.

Galatians 3:6

Belief in God is the key to righteousness.

Ephesians 4:17-32, 5:1-21

Like God in true righteousness and holiness.

1 Timothy 6:11; 2 Timothy 2:22

Flee evil. Pursue righteousness.

2 Timothy 3:16

Scripture is a tool toward righteousness.

2 Timothy 4:8, 2 Peter 3:13

Final righteousness comes after death.

Hebrews 12:11

Training in righteousness sometimes hurts. It isn't automatic!

James 3:18

Peace and righteousness go together.