

# Lesson 1: The Righteousness of God

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## 1. The Gospel Order:

*It is simply the systematic order of the various doctrines of the plan of salvation.*

- Wheel of Faith
- Steps to Christ
- Revelation 14:12 *Commandments and faith*

A. It can be presented in any Rubric that you wish, but it must contain the essential components of all the gospel ideas that are necessary for salvation.

### B. The Word Bank of Gospel Terms:

*The word bank is a list of terms from the bible that define the gospel.*

Justification	Holiness	Calvary	Blood
Sanctification	Perfection	Death	Sacrifice
Righteousness	Propitiation	Life	Flesh
Repentance	Conviction	Baptism	Law
Redemption	Salvation	Confession	Obedience
Judgment	Imputed	Imparted	Title
God's Love	Fitness	Covenant	Sin

## 2. We are going to begin the process of looking at the gospel order:

A. How does Paul introduce the gospel to the Romans? What is the basis of the power of God to save people?

**Romans 1:16** \_\_\_\_\_

B. What does the gospel of Christ reveal?

**Romans 1:17** \_\_\_\_\_

C. What is our relationship to that righteousness?

**Romans 1:17** \_\_\_\_\_

3. Paul's first idea of the gospel order is that in order to have life before God we must be Justified by faith in the righteousness of God. Let us begin our next segment with looking at three words: Just, Life, and Righteousness.

A. Adam and the obligatory covenant. What did God require of Adam?

**Genesis 2:16** \_\_\_\_\_

In the beginning God granted life to Adam and Eve on the basis of obedience to His commandment. This is known as the *obligatory covenant*, or in other words the covenant between God and man was based upon obedience to God's law. As long as Adam perfectly obeyed God's law, he would be granted life. Adam lived the righteousness of the law out perfectly before God; therefore, God could legally grant him life. In fact, this is the very law by which all the created universe exists. The other created worlds, and the various orders of angels, all have life granted to them by virtue of their ongoing capacity to obey. They live by their own righteousness.

Consider this statement. *"It was possible for Adam, before the fall, to form a righteous character by obedience to God's law."*

B. The fall: Unfortunately, Adam does not obey, and thus he does not remain righteous, and the obligatory covenant was broken. What did this mean for Adam and the human race?

1. What was the result of Adam's disobedience?

**Genesis 2: 17** \_\_\_\_\_

2. Because of Adam's sin what spread to all men?

**Romans 5:12** \_\_\_\_\_

C. We can conclude that eternal life was dependent upon eternal obedience, and the penalty for breaking the obligatory covenant was, and still is, death. Therefore, according to Paul, man needs a way of escape from this looming penalty of death. To fix this problem Paul introduces us to a legal term whereby the human race can be set free from the penalty of death. Paul says that we need to be Justified!

Let us spend some time with this word. The word for Justified is the Greek word δίκαιός {dikaios}, which means righteous, just or right. So, when we say

“Righteousness by Faith” it is the same as Justification by Faith. To be a just person or to be a righteous person is to say that they are just or right before a law, and in this case, we are saying that to be righteous or just is to be so before God’s law. Which means that if we are to be considered a righteous or a just person, we would have to keep the law or the obligatory covenant perfectly as the Angels of God. But as we have seen, that is not possible, for Paul has already argued that the whole human race is unrighteous and unjust before God’s law.

- How many are guilty before God?

**Romans 3:19** \_\_\_\_\_

- How does Isaiah describe our Righteousness?

**Isaiah 64:6** \_\_\_\_\_

- How many are Righteous according to Paul?

**Romans 3:10** \_\_\_\_\_

Can a person be justified or righteous by keeping the law through his or her own effort?

- **Romans 3:20** - Can we be just before the law by doing good deeds? Y / N
- **Romans 4:1-2** - Can a person be Justified or Righteous before God even if he really was a good person like Abraham? Y / N
- **Galatians 2:21** - Can Righteousness come through keeping the law? Y / N
- How many people are justified by the law?

**Galatians 3:11** \_\_\_\_\_

So, let us conclude this section. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God to save the human race. Humanity needs to be saved because the obligatory covenant of law that we were under as a prerequisite for eternal life was broken. As a result, Adam’s race has no righteousness or justification whereby we are granted eternal life. However, there is a way that Paul says we can be justified or righteous which will grant us eternal life. And that is the section we will explore next.

4. Let us read this quote to learn **how** we can be just or righteous before God's law so that we can have eternal life.

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*"It was possible for Adam, before the fall, to form a righteous character by obedience to God's law. But he failed to do this, and because of his sin our natures are fallen and we cannot make ourselves righteous. Since we are sinful, unholy, we cannot perfectly obey the holy law. We have no righteousness of our own with which to meet the claims of the law of God. But Christ has made a way of escape for us. He lived on earth amid trials and temptations such as we have to meet. He lived a sinless life. He died for us, and now He offers to take our sins and give us His righteousness. If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ's character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned."*

- A. The above paragraph is a perfect example of how a person can become just or righteous before God's law. It is not by obeying the law that we become justified, but by accepting the righteousness of Christ's perfect obedience to the law on our behalf. It could also be stated this way that Jesus offers to justify us before the broken law not by our work, obedience or merit, but by His.
- B. Let us determine another important idea in the discovery of Righteousness by faith.
- Whose Righteousness is revealed?  
**Romans 3:21** \_\_\_\_\_
  - Whose Righteousness is demonstrated?  
**Romans 3:25** \_\_\_\_\_
  - Whose Righteousness is demonstrated?  
**Romans 3:26** \_\_\_\_\_
  - Where does Righteousness come from?  
**Philippians 3:9** \_\_\_\_\_

We have already defined what righteousness is earlier. The following quote demonstrates that He lived out a perfect righteousness.

Which is why the above text from Romans are emphatic that we must rely on His Righteousness and never our own.

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*“By His perfect obedience He has satisfied the claims of the law, and my only hope is found in looking to Him as my substitute and surety, who obeyed the law perfectly for me. By faith in His merits, I am free from the condemnation of the law. He clothes me with His righteousness, which answers all the demands of the law. I am complete in Him who brings in everlasting righteousness. He presents me to God in the spotless garment of which no thread was woven by any human agent.” 1sm396*

It is His righteousness, literally, because for 33 years as a human being He lived out the law of God under the obligatory covenant perfectly as Adam should have. He did not sin once, and so He lived the perfect human life. That is to say he lived out a perfect righteousness, or He was a Just man before the law of God. It was literally His own righteousness that He earned.

5. Let us draw a conclusion. We have no righteousness to claim as our own, and we need righteousness to have eternal life, and Jesus has a perfect righteousness worked out.

Where is the only place we can go to obtain this righteousness so desperately needed for eternal life?

The answer is obvious, and forms the entire narrative of the gospel. Jesus is the only place to go to obtain this life-giving righteousness. The next question is how can we receive that righteousness?

- How do we obtain righteousness?

**Romans 3:22** \_\_\_\_\_

- How are we justified?

**Romans 3:24** \_\_\_\_\_

- What are we justified by?

**Romans 3:26** \_\_\_\_\_

It is a beautiful truth that we are justified, or seen as righteous, before the law of God by faith in Jesus' own righteousness. We must exercise faith in what He has done. Which simply means that I will not trust in my righteousness, but rather, I will trust in the righteousness that Jesus lived on this earth.