

The Science of Cultivating Faith

No. 15

The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith. Rom. 1:17.

Faith is complete dependence upon the word of God, expecting that word to do what the word itself says.

Is there, then, righteousness spoken by the word of God, so that people can depend completely upon that word, that the word shall accomplish what the word says?

There is. Indeed, that is the very object of the gift of Christ. For him "God set forth . . . to demonstrate his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." Rom. 3:25.

Seeing then that God hath set forth Christ expressly to declare, *to speak*, the righteousness of God, it is certain that the word of God has been spoken, upon which there can be complete dependence, expecting that word to do what that word says. In other words, there is righteousness that can be received by faith.

Wherein is this word spoken?—It is spoken in the word "forgiveness." "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins;" "there is forgiveness with thee."

Now what is the meaning of the word forgive? The word "forgive" is composed of "for" and "give," which otherwise is give for. To forgive, therefore, is simply to give for. For the Lord to forgive sin is to give for sin. But what does the Lord give for sin?—He declares "*his righteousness* for the remission of sins."

Therefore when the Lord forgives—gives for—sin, he gives righteousness for sin. And as the only righteousness that the Lord has is his own, it follows that the only righteousness that God gives, or can give, for sin is the righteousness of God.

This is the righteousness of God as a gift. As all men have only sinned, and, if they are ever clear, must have forgiveness entirely free; and as the forgiveness of sin—the righteousness of God given for sin—is entirely free,—this is the righteousness of God as a free gift "upon all men unto justification of life." Rom. 5:18.

Every soul, therefore, who ever asks God for forgiveness of sin, in that very thing asks God to give him righteousness for sin. Every soul who asks God for forgiveness, asks it solely upon the word of God, which speaks forgiveness. And faith is entire dependence upon the word for what the word speaks. Thus righteousness is altogether of faith.

"Every one that asketh receiveth." You have asked the Lord many a time to forgive your sins; that is, you have asked him to give for your sin. But when you ask the Lord to give for your sin, in that you ask him to give the only thing that he does or can give for sin, which is righteousness. That is what it is to ask forgiveness of the Lord.

And He does forgive,—he does give for—your sins when you ask him. He *says* he does, and *he does*. "He is faithful"—that is, he will never fail—"and just to forgive us our sins." And the only thing he gives for sins is his righteousness.

Then why not thank him for the righteousness that he freely gives for your sins, when you ask him to?

Do you not see that righteousness by faith is just as plain and simple as the asking God for forgiveness of sin? Indeed, it is just that.

To believe that righteousness is given you for your sin, when you ask forgiveness; and thankfully receive that righteousness as the gift of God,—this is what it is to exercise faith.

Yet how true it is that "we suffer much trouble and grief because of our unbelief, and of our ignorance of how to exercise faith."

"Hast thou faith?" Have the faith of God. "Here are they that keep . . . the faith of Jesus."

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