

What is righteousness?

Websters: 1. Acting in a just, upright manner; virtuous
2. morally right or justifiable

Originally, righteous person was one whose behavior fit into the framework of his/her own society and fulfilled his/her obligations to society

Greek word with same root: “just” “justify” (does “just” sound too legalistic?)

“Innocent” – Luke 23:47 (p. 1642)

In Old Testament righteousness “is not a matter of actions conforming to a given set of absolute legal standards, but of behavior which is in keeping with the two-way *relationship* [the covenant] between God and man.”

New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology

God’s righteousness: By His nature, God cannot do what is morally wrong.

If God is righteous by definition, how can we become righteous? (We can’t.)

Made righteous: to be put into, or restored to a positive *relationship* with God

Sin ruptures the relationship / being made righteous wipes away sin

Only God can do this – and he does it on his terms, which requires faith (trust) in God alone, not idols or ourselves.

“We can enter (righteousness) only by accepting God as Lord and trusting him to restore and uphold it.” Paul Achtemeier

Paul/Saul as a Pharisee thought he was fulfilling the law... but what did his actions do to his relationship with God? Had he been righteous as Saul?

Does the law make us righteous? Can both Jews and Gentiles be made righteous?

Believers (those who have faith) live in Christ... Christ is righteous... so what about us?

Titus 3:4-5 (p. 1859)

New Revised Standard Version

Romans 3:21-25

²¹ But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, ²³ since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; ²⁴ they are now **justified by his grace as a gift**, through the **redemption** that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a **sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith**. He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed...