

Sermon on Righteousness presented at the Ottawa, Kansas,
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A. T. Jones [attended by Mrs. White.]

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The subject is how to obtain that righteousness of which we read yesterday, the righteousness of God which only will avail. Rom. 3:24, justified means accounted righteous. How? Freely. By what means? Grace. What is grace? Favor. Let us ever believe this text, holding fast to it forever. In regard to grace we read Romans 11:6, which means we are justified freely by his grace without works otherwise it is not grace. Another reference, Ephesians 2:8-9-5. Now turn to Romans 4:4 with Romans 11:4. You see then why if it be our works it is no more of grace. If we have to work to obtain grace, then we bring the Lord in debt to us, and if he does not pay he does us injustice. To pay is not a favor, it is paying a debt. We are accounted righteous freely by his grace and that not of works. p. 1, Para. 2, [KANSAS2].

I read now Romans 9:1-2. Abraham was the father of all them that believe -- the spiritual father. Can we expect to receive more than he did? If he was justified by works, he gloried in himself. Now put Romans 9:2 with 1 Corinthians 1:27-31. The Lord has arranged it that all should glorify him and not themselves because to glorify a sinner, a rebel, would not be proper for a government, allowing them to come back in harmony with it glorifying themselves. All the woes in the world came through Satan attempting to glorify himself. "I will be like the Most High." To allow a sinner then to glorify himself would force pardon being extended to Satan, also. Now, Christ is made unto us righteousness and sanctification, and we glory in Christ and not ourselves. If we believe on him our faith is counted to us for righteousness. But can the Lord justify the ungodly? Yes, Christ came to justify sinners, so read carefully this verse, Romans 4:5. The first thing then to learn is that we are ungodly and confess it, and God will count him righteous. The Lord cannot justify and save any who cannot see their true condition. There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine that need no repentance. The Saviour came not to call righteous but sinners to repentance, then none but sinners will be saved. Now Romans 4:16, "therefore it is of faith."

Why? That it might be by grace, "to the end that it may be sure." p. 1, Para. 3, [KANSAS2].

Faith is the easiest and most natural thing in the world. There is nothing wonderful about faith, as some think, and say "I try to believe and if I can't then how can I." But we can believe God with the same faculties we believe others. Don't try to believe -- quit it -- and believe. We either believe or don't believe -- then why not believe? Believe as a child, don't reason it out. Faith goes in advance of reason, knowledge and all else. At school the teacher pointed out a letter and told us "That is A," and that is all the evidence we have of it. We believed it; now let us receive the kingdom of heaven as we did when a child the words of your teacher. If we reason on faith we can never believe, because to reason faith is unreasonable because the effort of reason always produces doubt. It begins and ends with a "how." Because faith is the simplest and easiest thing for all, God put his salvation in the surest place, that we might have it and know that he has it. Now, Romans 5:6-8-10, Christ died for you because you are ungodly, and he died for the ungodly, and you can be counted righteous right now if you will believe it. Christ's death reconciled the world unto God but it never saved any or ever can. His death met the penalty of the law, but we are saved by Christ's life. p. 1, Para. 4, [KANSAS2].

Read Romans 4:25. By his death then we have reconciliation, by his life justification, and by the second coming we have salvation -- all these being necessary to complete the plan of salvation. The law of God shows a man to be ungodly -- and as by the law is the knowledge of sin which is ungodliness (we will call it now sin). So turn to Prov. 28:13 (mercy being treating one better than he deserves). Remember, believe this fully; our habit has been to confess our sins and then doubt the forgiveness and carry them all away with us, obtaining no peace because we doubted. "God never appointed us to wrath." -- 1 Thess. 5:9. He shows the laws to save us from them, the knowledge of them being a token of his love, that there is Jesus to take them all from us. He calls us to obtain salvation. So do not take the knowledge of your sins as a token of his wrath. "Whoso confesses his sins shall be saved." -- Rom. 4:6-7. Now 1 John 1:9, 5:17, "If we confess our sins he will forgive and cleanse us from all our sins." p. 1, Para. 5, [KANSAS2].

Believe this fully and go free. How many go to the soul confessing and never believe they are forgiven? To believe part of the word and not all is infidelity. "Man shall live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord." To confess a sin and not believe in its forgiveness is infidelity. Don't wait for feeling -- that has nothing to do with faith. How can anyone know how he ought to feel when sins are forgiven? If you trust to feeling you are like a wave of the sea tossed by the winds to and fro. Often revivalists tell mourners how he felt when he was forgiven, and they try to feel as he did and fail, as no two can ever feel just alike and so no one can tell if converted. Faith does not rest on evidence. If it rests on the reasonableness of a thing, it rests on reason and not faith. If it rests on the confidence we have in the person, and that person contradicts himself, then where is faith? If one says, I will do some great thing, and I believe him; if he comes again and says something that uproots all he previously said, what am I to do? Now let me prove this: Abraham was justified by faith and it was counted to him for righteousness. Read the account of it, Gen. 15:5 and onward. Sometime after that Isaac was born and growing up Abraham was told to offer him up, directly against the promise. Where did his faith come in? By believing the promise independent of appearances. p. 2, Para. 1, [KANSAS2].

That was faith furnishing its own evidence. Abraham believed it until all came right because God had promised it would. Now turn to Romans 4:16-22; Abraham against hope believed in hope, his faith furnishing the hope, confidence and evidence. Never let our feelings, then, have any control over our faith. Feelings belong to Satan. Relegate them to him. "The just shall live by faith." Brethren, let us live that way. When we believe it puts Christ in place of the sin and when Satan comes to attack us he finds only Christ, and then we have the victory over Satan, not delivering us from temptation, but giving us power to conquer temptation, and gaining the victory so that particular temptation never comes again. We are conquerors there forever. If you want feeling about this, praise the Lord because he ever pardons your sin and because you believe his promise, and there will be feeling enough within you to be satisfactory. Look for God, and he will put a song in your mouth. Now, do you believe my opening text, that we are justified freely. Often we sin and feel

so ashamed and bad over it we wait a few days to get a little better before we go to the Lord for forgiveness. We try to make ourselves good first. p. 2, Para. 2, [KANSAS2].

There is a tendency in every soul to this. That is justification by works the same as fasting or punishing oneself first. This is the root of monkery and all the penances in the Catholic church. Then, if we do not want to be papists, let us quit. We have done no better, but the sin has lost the horror before us, and we are better in our own eyes, and then confess only our surface sin, so the Holy Spirit shows us again the sin that was covered up. Now the only way to get rid of it is to confess it at once, because the Lord shows us a sin just as it is, and right then, so that he can forgive it fully and completely. When we try to catch up our sin by doing better, we are putting on more and more of the filthy rags spoken of by Isaiah, which is our own righteousness. Let us read Revelation 3:11-18. Let us trust the Lord and believe his promises. p. 2, Para. 3, [KANSAS2].