

God's Righteousness and God's Law

Contents

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS AND GOD'S LAW	5
WHAT IS GOD'S LAW?	5
<i>How Many 'Laws' Are There?</i>	7
WHAT IS GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS?.....	7
<i>God and His Righteousness Are One</i>	7
RIGHTEOUSNESS WILL NOT LONG TOLERATE UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.....	10
<i>Man Needs to be Righteous</i>	10
<i>Attaining God's Righteousness</i>	11
<i>Are Good Works Necessary for Salvation?</i>	19
ACKNOWLEDGE THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD	21

God's Righteousness and God's Law

We will deal with God's Old Testament Law first and later look at God's Righteousness. The Old Testament Law is sometimes known as the Law of Moses or the Mosaic Law because God gave it to Moses so that he could deliver it to the nation of Israel.

What Is God's Law?

The Law of God is simply that which God wants. It is the will of God for mankind and/or the individual man (or woman). There was always a "law" of some type that mankind had to observe. The first law or simple commandment was in Eden when God told Adam,

“...but of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil you may not eat, for in the day that you eat of it, dying you shall die.” (Gen 2:17 LITV)

This particular translation by the *Literal Translation of the Bible*, “dying thou shalt die,” agrees with the commentator Adam Clarke’s understanding of the original language. The meaning is not that Adam should physically die suddenly after eating the forbidden fruit (as in “thou shalt surely die” - KJV), but that death would begin its insidious work in him, resulting in his death many years later – or however many years were allotted to him or his individual successors. Nevertheless, it would appear that spiritual death was immediate: He had broken the Law of God and simultaneously broken his relationship with God and, without God, Adam was spiritually dead.

Looking at the situation with our vastly increased knowledge of how God works and our greater understanding of the human anatomy, I wonder at times if Adam could sense the profound change that took place in his body after the curse was pronounced against him. But that is another subject reserved for another time and place.

After the Garden experience, there were always moral and ethical strictures of some kind placed on mankind. Without them the race would not have had any moral compass. Without a moral compass man would be, as ironic as it might seem, God's highest creative work left to wander in an ethical wasteland. God always had some way of conveying His will to men. This is notable in the short records we have of men who walked with God. They were individuals like Seth and Enos, Enoch – whom God took from the earth before he could die – and Noah.

Then, in due time, God enacted the law that is now variously known as the Mosaic Law, the Old Covenant (Testament) or, in Christian conversation, simply, The Law. The Old Testament Law was merely the will of God in a written, codified form. It is abundantly evident that God progressively revealed His glorious Self and His Righteousness (will) to mankind over the centuries. The Israelites certainly did not know as much about God as we do today (and consequently we have the greater responsibility to do His bidding). But the Israelites knew more about God than their illustrious ancestors named above.

We cannot overlook the “second” Law of God: the New Covenant He constructed from the riven side of the Savior. It is the substance, if you will, of which the Mosaic Law was only the shadow. The New Covenant was what God had been guiding man to ever since the fall in Eden.

All of the Old Testament was based on the coming of Jesus Christ and the New Law of Liberty He would bring. When the Christ Child was born in Bethlehem all heaven rejoiced, but most of the world neither knew nor cared. The interesting thing is that God did not alert the worldly powers or potentates of what He was doing in a humble ox stall in an insignificant town of a subjugated nation. He sent notice of the Royal Nativity to a band of shepherds in the hills of Judea. That was scarcely the way to herald the newborn King.

God is not moved by such things as worldly power and splendor. The glory of the world does not draw from Him tender

concern and grace. Only those who are lowly in heart can wring from Him grace and Righteousness, which is the essence of God and equates to salvation; and we all need salvation to the utmost.

How Many 'Laws' Are There?

Are there two laws of God? Well, apparently yes, but actually no. If the righteousness of God equates to the Being of God, there cannot be two laws unless there are two Gods. Confusing? Let me explain: There was the Old Covenant that God enforced before Christ's death and there is the New Covenant that has been in force since the death of Christ. The Old Covenant (Mosaic Law) was fulfilled for us in Jesus who then promulgated a new law: the New Covenant or Testament. So in essence there is only one law of God, the old one having been fulfilled and superseded by the new.

The old law set forth primarily the righteousness and justice of God while at the same time displaying His mercy and grace. The New Covenant primarily sets forth the mercy and grace of God while at the same time never negating His righteousness and justice. It is all one law of one God, a law that expresses to us His characteristics and traits – His nature or personality, if you will.

What Is God's Righteousness?

God and His Righteousness Are One

To attempt to portray the righteousness of God (there is no other righteousness) is akin to trying to describe the fragrance of a costly perfume. The fragrance and the perfume are essentially one. We can say also that God and His righteousness are one. Therefore, God is righteous because of His being God. God does not meet any set standard of righteousness. God Himself is the standard; *He* is righteousness. But the righteousness of God is much, much more than a pleasant aroma; it is awesome and terrifying, especially to us poor mortals who are not only born in sin but saturated by it. We who have at least a fair knowledge of

the Scriptures know how dreadful it can be. If God did not have any other facets, we would be completely crushed by that one righteous characteristic. God declared His unapproachable holiness to Moses when He told Moses,

“Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. {21} And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: {22} And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: {23} And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.”
(Exo 33:20-23)

Throughout the history of man the righteousness and the very essence of God constitute the “law” of God. The Law of God to man, in whatever age, shows God’s righteousness to man and simultaneously reveals to man what God expects of him in order for him to attain to the righteousness that is resident only in God. This righteousness was in the Old Covenant (Testament) that God made with Israel and it is in the New Covenant (Testament) that He enacted on Calvary between Himself and spiritual Israel – all who believe in Christ.

The Mosaic Law was fulfilled in Christ and is no longer binding on the believer of today except as it is restated in the new law of liberty, the New Covenant God made with man.¹ Full

¹ This is why the law of the Sabbath is not binding on today’s believer. It is nowhere restated in the New Testament. Much has been made about John’s reference to the “Lord’s Day” (Rev. 1.10), which is evidently the first day of the week, Sunday. Also Paul advises the saints in Corinth, “Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store [set aside an offering]...” (1 Cor. 16.2) None of this proves anything except that the disciples were in the habit of calling the first day of the week the Lord’s Day because Jesus arose from the dead on that

obedience to the New Covenant will give the believer salvation and it will not fail to produce the concomitant works of righteousness.

The “works of righteousness” are involved in our continuing push to be like the Master. In this life we who love Christ feel an urgency to bring to literal perfection the holiness that God has bestowed on us by our faith in Jesus. God expects us to work to this end and, if we love Him, we should have a self-imposed need to be more and more like Jesus. Thus the need for “works”: we are working out our salvation, the salvation that we already have by faith.

In heaven we'll feel no such demands: we will be perfect in every Christian virtue. Here we are counted to be perfect by faith while we are constantly working to make it so. In the life hereafter there will be no need for God to “reckon” (count) us to be like Christ and there will be no striving toward perfection: it will be fact. Faith (“the substance of things hoped for”) will be nonexistent. Working out our salvation will similarly be in limbo. The hoped-for perfection will have become a solid reality. The old carnal nature will be literally dead and buried and forgotten. The only time it will come to mind is when we praise the wonderful name of Jesus for the tremendous work of salvation He has wrought in us.

Note that God is not only what we want Him to be at any particular time for a particular situation: He is always all of God from extreme to extreme, from love to justice, from grace to strict righteousness. He is never more than nor less than all that He is. He is the God who never changes in the slightest way. We see a certain facet of God now and then, later, we see another

day. There are no injunctions in the New Testament to observe the old Mosaic Sabbath or the newly named Lord's Day.

facet and we conclude that He has changed, but God has always been all that He is and ever will be.

"For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." (Mal 3:6)

Righteousness Will Not Long Tolerate Unrighteousness

Gen. 19:12-25, 38:7; Num. 16:1-40

Not only is God terribly righteous and perfectly just; he will not long tolerate anything less than a flawless righteousness from any of his rational creatures. How long is "not long"? It is whatever God says it is. In this instance, "not long" stretches from Lucifer's rebellion to the final judgment that God will mete out to men and fallen angels in the consummation of all things. By all evidence to date, this will not be long even in man's terms.

Man Needs to be Righteous

Despite God's ultimate intolerance of any being who is less than righteous, we do not have the power to make ourselves righteous. And the shameful tatters of our own "righteousness" that we attempt to foist on God, God simply will not accept. They are an offense to His holy Being. We have an impasse here because Paul urges the Philippians (and us) to "work out your own salvation" (Philippians 2:12b), yet the same apostle states emphatically elsewhere,

"For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God." (Romans 4:2)

In the third chapter of the same letter to the Romans, verse 20, Paul maintains, "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." From the premise these last two scriptures lay down, we may infer that no works can make us righteous. We draw this conclusion because "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Romans 7:12), and if following such a law could not make a man

righteous, no amount of good works we perform can ever make us acceptable in the sight of God.

In his admonition to the Philippians to "work out" their own salvation, Paul was doubtless exhorting them to do good works and to put forth every effort to do righteously. Yet he contends throughout his epistles that such works will not save (make righteous) the one who does them. He drives home his favorite theme: the believer is justified by faith, not by works. How do we accomplish that?

Let us review the situation: We know that Paul – the one who emphasizes justification by faith alone – exhorts the believer to do good works; and James confirms it, telling us that "faith without works is dead." (James 2:26b) So again it seems that we are heading up a dead-end street. If our works do not save us, why should we engage in them? If we can never be righteous on our own, why should we behave righteously?

It is simply because our living faith in God ("faith without works is dead") compels us to do good. Further, our love for God causes us to seek to please Him in every way we can. It makes us want to be as much like Him as is possible by the grace of God. These works, which can never of themselves please God, are made acceptable to him by the blood of Jesus Christ. The blood covers every offering and sacrifice brought to God in faith. This coverage extends from the very first sacrifice (a form of good works) that Abel brought to God in the beginning.

Attaining God's Righteousness

As we have noted, the law and the righteousness of God are synonymous. In this section of *God's Righteousness and God's Law* we are concerned primarily with the New Covenant Law sometimes called the Law of Liberty. That can be misleading because, although we are set free from the law of sin and bondage, this "Law of Liberty," in its own way, imposes more strict moral requirements on us than the Old Covenant.

We want specifically to address two mistaken views of the New Testament that too many Christians have. The first is that a person keeping the law (doing righteously) will be saved on the basis of his good works. The second is that faith alone, without the good works attending it, will save a person. We will see that both views are grievously in error.

Can We Attain Righteousness by Righteous Deeds?

This belief quickly runs afoul of the Scriptures. Consider the following:

“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.” (Jas. 2.10)

This means that, under the Old Testament law (to which James was referring), if you stole a cup you were as guilty in the sight of God as the man who committed murder or adultery. The Mosaic Law was like a twig: you might break off just a small part from the end of the twig, but that still rendered the twig incomplete – you had broken the whole twig. Such a divine view made it impossible for a person to keep the law perfectly. One small infraction would be the same as breaking the law in half. The man who fell into one “trivial” sin fell into the whole of sin.

Note this: Making all sins equal in the sight of God does not indicate that all sins are therefore of a minor nature. It means, rather, that all sins are detestable and intolerable to God. That is why Adam's disobedience (Gen. 3) brought such immediate and widespread consternation in the world – indeed, in the entire universe. But the old Law of Moses is not binding on us today.² It was fulfilled in Jesus, so we who have Jesus in

² In the 15th chapter of Acts, the apostles decided the issue of keeping the Mosaic Law once for all time. In a letter sent to all the Gentile congregations the apostles gave their learned opinion: “Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to

our hearts have fulfilled the Mosaic Law. (Mat. 5.17-NIV; Luke 24.44) Now it is vital for us to know where we stand in relation to the New Testament Law. To do that let's first go back to a time before the Mosaic Law was enacted, back to man's beginning.

There has never been a period in man's existence that he has been without a law to act as a bridle on him, keeping him in the way God wants him to go. You will note that Adam sinned long before there was a Mosaic Law, but obviously that did not mean there was no possibility of his sinning. God had set a restraint on Adam in the Garden and there have been restraints of some kind ever since.

God had given Adam a simple law that included the ban on eating the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.(Gen. 2.16) What Adam did was in our eyes relatively harmless. He ate the fruit that God had forbidden him to eat. He simply disobeyed, a sin we have been guilty of numberless times. Yet God judged him most harshly: Adam could not have broken God's law more severely if he had slain Eve – an outrageous concept – who was the only other human in the world.

The evidence of the enormity of Adam's sin is in the severity of the punishment God imposed on him. He was sentenced to physical and spiritual death and eternal damnation. Possibly Adam didn't realize fully what his penalty was; it is

whom we gave no such commandment...it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well." The prohibitions mentioned were in the OT Law and Jesus had carried them over into NT Law, in that way making them binding on all Christians.

likely that he could not have coped with it if he had known. All that God told Adam was that he would have to labor to get the soil to produce its fruits for him and that he would die physically. There is no recorded reference to eternal damnation at that fateful time.³

We know of eternal damnation only through the many warnings God has given us since He pronounced judgment on Adam and Eve in the Garden. But God seems to have taken care of the unspoken catastrophe for Adam and Eve by slaying an animal or animals to cover the nakedness of the sinful pair. In a beautiful symbolic act God sacrificed the animals for the sin of Adam and Eve (it was beautiful only because it previewed God's sacrificing His own life on Calvary), thus atoning for their sin and, at the same time, clothing them with His righteousness. The effectiveness of the sacrifice lay solely in the death many centuries later of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. You protest:

"If the work of atonement depends on the individual sinner's faith in Christ (Heb. 11.6), how could God's sacrificing the animals atone for Adam and Eve's sin? The sinful pair knew nothing of such theological items."

³ But, despite there being no mention of endless doom, there was still something worse than physical death that Adam had to face. He had to cope with the idea that spiritual death would shrivel his soul and trouble his spirit. Here he was, a creature completely dependent on his Maker and who had known God's fellowship all his life. Suddenly there is no divine friendship any longer. This had to be devastating, but apparently it went beyond the loss of friendship because God summarily ejected Adam from the Garden and forbade him to ever enter it again. Adam had to be like the newborn infant thrust from its mother's womb into a strange, cold world: Afraid and lonely.

That may be, but note the power of vicarious faith in which one person can effect the healing of another by the one person's faith in Christ. (Mark 2.3-12) In this situation we have the Almighty exercising His faith in the divinely envisioned death of Christ that would occur as surely as day overcomes the night. The result was still that Adam and Eve had sinned and they had to suffer for their sin (Rom. 6.23), but they suffered in hope, the hope of life that would last forever despite the death of the body.

Their ignorance of theology was as great as their innocence had once been. They did not know the ramifications of their sin. All they knew was that they had disobeyed God and were to suffer for it in their physical life. They knew nothing of eternal death and damnation. But God did, and He stepped into the breach by offering an animal sacrifice for them until the time that He Himself – God in the Person of Jesus Christ – would die for them!⁴ No, they certainly did not know the full ramifications of their sin; and it is clear there was nothing they did that atoned for their sin. They had absolutely no idea what to do. There was in fact nothing they could do and no act of penance they had to perform. Their sin was forgiven by faith alone, God's own rock-ribbed faith in the atoning blood of His Son Jesus Christ.

⁴ I have tried again and again to put into words the utter outrage and inconceivable love contained in this act of divine love. I have not succeeded, nevertheless it is an outrage that the incomparable God should have had to die in torment at the hands of insufferable man. It is inconceivable love because no creature could love so much nor give so much for that love. I am so inadequate to writing on the subject, feeling more in my heart than I can possibly put into words about the awesomeness of divine love.

In reviewing the debacle in the Garden of Eden, it appears that the passage in Jas. 2.10 has been in effect as long as there has been a relationship between God and man. There was only one law of God in the Old Testament age and there is only one in this New Testament age. No matter the era, there is always just one law of God. In neither age did God establish two sets of regulations, one for murder, adultery and the like, and another for lying and coveting and other "lesser" sins. In both the Old and New Testament time frames the law that forbids lying (Ex. 20.16) and coveting (Ex. 20.17), the "petty" sins, also forbids idolatry (Ex. 20.3-5) and murder (Ex. 20.13) and fornication. (Ex. 20.14) As it is with the Old Testament Law, when you break the New Testament Law in any fashion, you break it all. It is clear: "The wages of sin is death." The writer did not specify a sin: Any one sin, without exception, leads to death.

A Fateful Impasse

This makes for a pretty grim situation inasmuch as all of these sinful tendencies are a part of our nature. But we today have much more in our favor than the Israelites had under the Mosaic Law. Two important factors are these:

1. We have Jesus who sacrificed Himself once only for all our sins (Heb. 9.24-28) and who stands continually before the Father in heaven (Rom. 8.34; Heb. 7.25), offering His blood as atonement for our sins. All we have to do when we have fallen is turn to Christ in faith (when we do so, we have repented anew); His blood will wash our sin away.
2. We have a law that changes our hearts first and then manifests itself in our actions. Jesus made it very clear that an inner righteousness is now required to please God. He scolded the Pharisees:

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which

is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also." (Mat. 23.25)

The redemptive work of Calvary cleanses on the inside the one who believes, which then manifests itself in his outward actions. For supporting scriptures, please read Psa. 132:16; Zec. 3:1-7; Rom. 3:28, 5:1; I Cor. 6:11.

Here is a quote from one of the above passages (in Zechariah) in which Zechariah had an interesting vision:

"And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him...now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he [the angel]...spake unto those that stood before him, saying, take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him [Joshua] he said, behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.

"And I said, let them set a fair mitre [clean turban] on his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments..." (Zechariah 3:1-5)

The time of Zechariah's vision was the period after the Babylonian exile. God used him and Haggai to bring His messages of encouragement and reproof to the Jews whom the king of Babylon had allowed to return to Palestine.

Joshua's shameful appearance in the vision was not because Joshua was necessarily more sinful than his contemporaries. If it had been a vision of censure specifically for Joshua, there would have been a stronger verbal criticism of him. As the chief religious figure of a nation founded on a belief in Jehovah, Joshua was a fitting symbol of his fellow Jews. The filthy garments represented the state of every man in his original condition in God's sight.

"Take away the filthy garments," the angel of the lord commanded. The "angel of the lord" may be here, as in some other scriptures that use the same appellation (Genesis 16:7-14;

22:9-12; Judges 6:11-23, and others), a manifestation of God himself. Although called an angel, the angel spoke as though he were God, using "I" instead of "he" and speaking authoritatively.

They put a clean turban on Joshua's head and clothed him in clean garments, all this signifying that the righteousness of God was given to Joshua. Additionally, God-given authority was bestowed on him. If Joshua could have done these things for himself, God would not have done it for him. But Joshua could not do these things any more than the average man can, and God, in his grace and mercy, did it for him.

How Do We Attain Righteousness Today?

We need to make this discussion and its assumptions relevant to today's believer in Christ. How can we today be cleansed of our sins and put on the righteousness of God? Some will say, by baptism in water. This cannot be. Water does not wash away sins. Only the blood of Christ can do that. How then do we apply the blood to our sinful selves?

Paul advises us that,

“...by grace are ye saved through faith...” (Ephesians 2:8)

and

“Therefore it [the promise of God] is of faith, that it might be by grace....” (Romans 4:16a)

In Philippians 3:9 Paul expresses the wish that he might:

“...be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.’

Now let us reason a bit. It is the blood of Christ that washes away our sins and God applies the blood by our faith in Jesus Christ. It is further obvious from the scripture just quoted that we receive the righteousness of God through faith also. Then being forgiven of our sins and being clothed with the

righteousness of God occur simultaneously by faith in Jesus Christ.

Further support of this assumption comes from God's actions in the Garden of Eden after Adam and Eve had sinned. He covered their nakedness with the skins of an animal or animals. To do this, of course, God had to slay an animal (or animals) and thus He achieved two objectives at once: He shed the required blood to atone for the sin of Adam and Eve and He provided a covering for their nakedness. The covering symbolized the righteousness of God.

The conclusion is that God cannot tolerate unrighteousness or any form of imperfection beyond the set time of grace that he has provided us. Anyone who would live with God beyond this life or this age must become righteous like Him.

We can attain this only by faith in Jesus Christ.

Are Good Works Necessary for Salvation?

Have you ever wondered why we go through the motions of being righteous? Why are we busy doing righteous deeds when only Jesus Christ can make us righteous? Oh, we are regular little Miss Goody Twoshoes: We fast, we pray, we give our tithes and offerings and visit the sick, give to those who are poorer than we, and on and on. Paul often warns us about trusting in our righteous acts. In his epistle to the Galatians he remarks,

“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law [righteous deeds]: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” (Galatians 2:16)

There are numerous other scriptures attesting to the preeminence of faith over works and asserting that faith alone can justify us before God. A few of them are listed here: Rom. 3.27, 4.2,6, 9.32, 11.6; Eph. 2.9; Gal. 3.5. So why do we insist on “being righteous”? If we are made righteous by faith, it seems

that we could give in to our sinful tendencies while all the while taking refuge in the scriptures above that state we are righteous solely because we believe in Christ.

Before we crawl out on this very shaky limb, we need to consider several counterpoints: In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus told His disciples,

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” (Mat. 5.16)

This is a clear, unambiguous statement. A short while later in the same sermon Jesus also told His disciples that

“...except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (Mat. 5.20)

In this instance it is not clear whether Jesus was talking about literal works of righteousness or the state of being righteous by faith in Christ. If it refers to works of righteousness, the point is made. If it refers to being righteous by faith, recall James' statement that faith unattended by works is dead. (Jas. 2.14-26) Of course a dead faith can't save us. It is important to your understanding this discourse that you read the full text on faith and works by James (James 2.14-26).

We conclude from the Scriptures that salvation does indeed come only by faith in Christ. But we also conclude that the same faith, if it is alive, will produce works of righteousness. If it does not, there is no effective faith and no salvation. We could quote here, “By their fruits ye shall know them,” but we believe this refers to traits of character such as love, meekness, temperance, etc., rather than good works. Nevertheless it is obvious from the whole of Scripture that faith and works go hand in hand. As Paul himself – the staunch proponent of justification by faith rather than by works – wrote,

“...we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” (Eph 2.10)

We know God's nature from His written Word. It is inconceivable that the God we know would take anyone sweeping into heaven who did nothing at all for God, reached out no helping hand to those in need and did nothing to advance the Kingdom of God on earth.

Don't rest indolently on your faith. If it is a living faith, it will produce the works that signify its viability. If it is a dead faith, it is the same as no faith and you are in the same condition with it: dead – and still condemned to hell.

Acknowledge the Sovereignty of God

So – tell me, who is God but God? We have to concede that He is indeed GOD – up, down and across the invisible worlds of human imagination and the visible worlds of the universe. There is no place or concept that can successfully shut Him out. He is simply, inexplicably and incontrovertibly – God. The smallest and meanest minds cannot wish Him away just because He does not square with their lifestyle; the greatest intellects cannot reason him into their trick bag of myths or wishful thinking. He is God and He has no intention of disappearing.

God Needs No Help

God doesn't require a prop to His God-ness. He does not need someone to love despite His being the epitome of love. We should not get smug despite our exalted position relative to other creatures. If no man would give God what He wants, He could make the stones sing His praise, and the trees of the field would worship before him. Or He could create an entirely new race of men on which He could lavish His love. Only a God has that authority and power.

God's own Righteousness, His own Law, His own Self – they all demand that we accept what He wills, when He wills it and in whatever way He wills it.

He Has Waited Long

God is getting filled to capacity with humanity's conceit and blasphemy. He is beginning to stir Himself, and when He moves his mighty arm – the arm that humankind has tried for centuries to make disappear by logic – across the chessboard of creation, nations and individuals will go tumbling about like the pawns they are. He is even now starting to flex that mighty arm and peoples and individuals are seeing the "beginning of sorrows." Nations are clashing with each other in many places; individuals are suffering terribly; there are great natural catastrophes all over the world. But you know all this; it is everywhere, even in America.

So let's concentrate all of our efforts into serving God and seeking to fulfill all of the divine pleasure in our individual lives.

"Let the time that is past suffice for doing what the Gentiles [sinners] like to do, living in licentiousness, passions, drunkenness, revels, carousing, and lawless idolatry. " (1 Pet. 4.3)

But perhaps you may have done all that you know to do, yet, even as I, you may not see much of the fruit of your labor. I urge you to blot out all of that negative scribbling from your thoughts and write this indelibly on your mind: *What we see as the fruit of our labor does not matter; what matters is only what God sees.* However, in His grace and mercy, God lets me see here and there just enough to keep me going. That small evidence coupled with the solid assurance that I am doing what God wants, is sufficient. I would like to think that if I never saw any signs of fruitful labor, it would be all right. But only God knows what I can take and only He knows how to temper the March wind to the shorn lamb.

Let obstacles suddenly spring up in our way like popcorn exploding in a hot skillet; never mind the setbacks and

disappointments – I wish for you the same mindset I have. I am confident that I am walking in the path God has ordained for me from an eternity ago. Even a Moses or a Paul could not do more than God allotted to them. There is no way we can fail – if we refuse to fail. We will without doubt attain to the Righteousness of God. We will without doubt attain to greatness because all who seek to do the full will of God are undeniably great.

