

Eagerly Waiting

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Christians in Galatia: *“But we who live by the Spirit eagerly wait to receive by faith the righteousness God has promised to us”* (Galatians 5:5).

Righteousness is a key element of God’s character. God is perfectly right, or true. And He always does the right thing—His actions are righteous.

Similarly, the word righteousness can mean two different things for us. First, it can mean to stand in a right relationship with God (2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 1:17; Romans 3:21). This is the sense that is spoken of Abraham, the man of faith: *“Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness”* (Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3). Through his obedient faith, Abraham enjoyed a right relationship with God.

Of course, Jesus Christ came to earth, lived a perfect life, died for our sins, and was raised again from the dead to make it possible for us to have a right relationship with our Father, or in other words, to be righteous in God’s sight (Romans 3:21-26, Philippians 3:9). Christ Jesus Himself is even called our *“righteousness, holiness, and redemption”* (1 Corinthians 1:30).

Second, righteousness can mean simply doing the right thing (Proverbs 16:12; Ezekiel 18:5; Matthew 5:20; Matthew 6:1). Whenever a person does what is right or good or true, he is doing a righteous act.

The critical point in all this is that we cannot do either one by ourselves. We cannot put ourselves in a right relationship with God by trying to be good enough. Neither can we do the right thing consistently everyday without God’s help. The Holy Spirit plays a vital role in both.

It is the Spirit who gives us new birth, cleanses us, and comes to live within us, so that we can have a right relationship with God (John 3:3-6; Acts 2:38; Titus 3:4-7). And, it is the Spirit who works in us to transform our character, empower us, and guide us into an obedient life of doing right (Galatians 5:22-23; 2 Corinthians 3:18).

All of this is summed up beautifully in Romans 8. In verses 1-4, we see how we come into a right relationship with God through the Spirit. And, in verses 5-17, we are told how the Spirit’s presence transforms us to live a righteous life.

Let us be thankful to God that we can be in a relationship with Him as His Spirit-indwelled children. We are righteous in Christ. Let us also be righteous like Christ, by living in the obedience of faith.

Let’s eagerly expect the Spirit to be at work, transforming us to be like Jesus. Truly have faith that God will keep His promises!

Prayer

Abba Father, I want to be more eager in my waiting. I want to live in anticipation that the Holy Spirit is at work in me to transform me to be more like Jesus. I want to have strong faith that trusts your promises.

I am thankful that I can be right with you through Jesus. In Him, you see me as righteous. Now, please help me to do right each and every day—to your glory and for the blessing of others. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Scott