

Living by Jesus' First Sermon

Matthew 5:13 - 7:23

God Has Defined Righteousness In Every Dispensation

- In the beginning - Gen. 2:16-17
- After the flood - Gen. 9:1, 8-9
- At the call of Abraham - Gen. 12:1-3
- As Israel left Egypt - Ex. 12:1-20
- At Mount Sinai - Ex. 20:1-2
- At the return from captivity - Neh. 8:1-8

God Has Defined Righteousness In Every Dispensation

- And in every dispensation, humankind has tried to redefine it
- Jesus had to return their understanding to what God means by righteousness
 - Matt. 5:17-20

God Has Defined Righteousness In Every Dispensation

- Matt. 5:17-20 - “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. 18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. 19 Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- Godly Living

- Matt. 5:13-16 - “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. 14 You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- Handling Anger

- Matt. 5:21-26 - “You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' 22 But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire. 23 Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift...”

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- Purity of Heart

- Matt. 5:27-30 - “You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.”

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- Faithfulness in Marriage
 - Matt. 5:31-32 - “Furthermore it has been said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' 32 But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.”

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- Truthfulness

- Matt. 5:33-37 - “Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.' 34 But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; 35 nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36 Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. 37 But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.”

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- The Second Mile Principle
 - Matt. 5:38-40 - “You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' 39 But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. 40 If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. 41 And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. 42 Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.”

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- Excelling in Love

- Matt. 5:43-48 - “You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? 48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.”

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How Does God Define Righteousness?

- Secret Good Deeds

- Matt. 6:1-4 - “Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. 2 Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 3 But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.”

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- Prayer Life

- Matt. 6:5-13 - “And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 6 But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. 7 And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. 8 Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him...”

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- Genuine Forgiveness
 - Matt. 6:14-15 - “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- Private Devotion

- Matt. 6:16-18 - “Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.”

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- Spiritual Motives

- Matt. 6:19-21 - “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- Purity in Judgment

- Matt. 6:22-23 - “The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. 23 But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!”

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- Unbound to Riches
 - Matt. 6:24 - “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”
- Really Trusting God
 - Matt. 6:25-34

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- Righteous Judgment

- Matt. 7:1-6 - “Judge not, that you be not judged. 2 For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. 3 And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? 5 Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. 6 Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.”
- “Methinks thou doest protest too much.” (William Shakespeare, Hamlet; III, ii, 239)

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- Persistence in Prayer

- Matt. 7:7-12 - “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 9 Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him! 12 Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.”

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- God's Way

- Matt. 7:13-14 - “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.
14 Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.”

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- Handling Anger - 5:21-26
- Purity of Heart - 5:27-30
- Faithfulness in Marriage - 5:31-32
- Truthfulness - 5:33-37
- The Second Mile Principle - 5:38-40
- Excelling in Love - 5:43-48
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God Has Defined Righteousness In Every Dispensation (Conclusion)

- Fruitfulness - 7:15-20
- Obedience - 7:21-23
- Preparation - 7:24-27
- Preaching - 7:28-29

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- Fruitfulness

- Matt. 7:15-20 - "...16 You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? 17 Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Therefore by their fruits you will know them."

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- Micah 3:5 - “Thus says the LORD concerning the prophets Who make my people stray; Who chant ‘Peace’ While they chew with their teeth, But who prepare war against him who puts nothing into their mouths”
- John 15:2 - “Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.”
- Matt. 3:10 - “And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- Obedience

- Matt. 7:21-23 - “Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'”

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- Assuming a relationship
 - Luke 13:23-28 - “Then one said to Him, Lord, are there few who are saved? And He said to them, 24 Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. 25 When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from,' 26 then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' 27 But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.' 28 There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out.”

How Does God Define Righteousness?

- Familiar vs. fervent

- James 1:22-24 - “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; 24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.”

Preparation

- Matt. 7:24-27 - “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: 25 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: 27 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”

Preparation

- Luke 6:47-49 - “Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: 48 He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. 49 But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great.”

Preaching

- Matt. 7:28-29 - “And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, 29 for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.”
- Matt. 13:54 - “And when He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works?”
- John 7:46 - “...No man ever spoke like this Man!”

Preaching

- It was the content, not the delivery
- It was confidence conferred by truth, not bravado brought on by audience approval
- It was the beginning of a new kind of preacher and sermon that must continue to this day
- It was a return to the kind of preacher mandated by the Divine from the beginning.