

MARRIAGE BY THE BOOK

1. REVIEW: THE BELT OF TRUTH

Ephesians 6:14 (NASB) Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,

A. **DISCUSS**: HOW WE DO AND DO NOT APPROPRIATE THE ARMOR of GOD.

B. The **BELT OF TRUTH/GOD'S WORD** IS AVAILABLE TO US, BUT NOT PUT INTO US AT SALVATION.

1. It is UP TO US TO STUDY, UNDERSTAND, MEMORIZE, MEDITATE ON, AND APPLY GOD'S WORD in order for US TO BE VICTORIOUS IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE.

2. THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Ephesians 6:14 (NASB) Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,

A. **WHAT IS RIGHTEOUSNESS?**

1. IS RIGHTEOUSNESS THE SAME AS SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS?

2. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS?

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NASB) He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

2 Timothy 3:16 (NASB) All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

B. The **BELT OF TRUTH** comes **BEFORE THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS** because there **CANNOT BE RIGHTEOUSNESS APART FROM TRUTH**.

1. **TRUTH** is the **STANDARD**. **RIGHTEOUSNESS IS HOW** we work the **STANDARD** out.

2. There are **TWO SIDES** to **RIGHTEOUSNESS**:

3. THE **BEING** SIDE

4. THE **DOING** SIDE

a. They are **NOT** called the **DO-ATTITUDES**... they **ARE** called the **BE-ATTITUDES**!

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Matthew 5:1-12 (NASB) When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. He opened His mouth and *began* to teach them, saying, **Blessed** are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. **Blessed** are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. **Blessed** are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth. **Blessed** are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. **Blessed** are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. **Blessed** are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. **Blessed** are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. **Blessed** are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. **Blessed** are you when *people* insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

b. THE **WORLDLY DO-ATTITUDES**:

Blessed are **the self-confident** because they rule the world. Blessed are **positive-thinkers** because they don't need anybody's comfort. Blessed are **the cocky and assertive** because they get what they want. Blessed are **those who hunger for fame** because they get reality TV shows. Blessed are **the vengeful** because they get respect. Blessed are **the impure**, pleasure-seekers because they see a good time. Blessed are **those who beat their opponents** because the victors write the history books. Blessed are **the popular** because everybody loves them.

c. IN **CHRISTIANITY**, IT'S WHO WE **BE**... NOT WHAT WE **DO**.

d. IN **RELIGION**, IT'S MORE OFTEN WHAT WE **DO** THAN WHO WE **BE**.

C. When we talk about **SALVATION** we often think about the idea of the **FORGIVENESS OF SINS**.

1. While this is **ONE THING** that happens at the moment of **SALVATION**, it is **NOT** the **ONLY THING**

a. In fact, **FORGIVENESS ALONE** is **NOT** enough to get a person into **HEAVEN**.

2. **God** did **MORE THAN FORGIVE OUR SINS** through Jesus Christ **AT SALVATION**.

a. He also imputed, or **CREDITED** our account, with the **RIGHTEOUSNESS OF JESUS CHRIST**.

b. **AT SALVATION (JUSTIFICATION) GOD**:

1) **FORGAVE OUR SIN**.

2) **GAVE US HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS THROUGH HIS SON**.

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2 Corinthians 5:21 (NASB) He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that **we might become the righteousness of God in Him**

D. WHY? BECAUSE GOD AND SIN CANNOT COEXIST.

1. So... At SALVATION GOD REMOVED OUR PAST SIN AND REPLACED IT WITH THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF JESUS CHRIST SO WE COULD HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM.

a. NOW... WHEN GOD LOOKS AT US HE SEES US HE SEES US THROUGH THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF JESUS CHRIST... HE WHO KNEW NO SIN!!

E. Once we are SAVED (JUSTIFIED) satan can do NOTHING TO CHANGE OUR RIGHTEOUS STANDING (JUSTIFICATION) BEFORE GOD.

1. Since satan CAN NOT TAKE AWAY OUR STANDING BEFORE GOD... HE LOOKS FOR A WAY TO BREAK OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD by causing a BREACH between our POSITION of RIGHTEOUSNESS and our PRACTICE of RIGHTEOUSNESS = SIN.

a. SOOO... HE ENCOURAGES US BACK TO OUR PAST SIN PATTERNS!

1) By trying to SHIFT our FOCUS OFF of the SPIRITUAL and ONTO THE PHYSICAL.

i. WHAT WE CAN SEE, TASTE, TOUCH, SMELL, OR HEAR.

ii. WHICH KEEPS US DEALING WITH THE FRUIT (PHYSICAL SIDE) OF OUR SIN, INSTEAD OF THE ROOT (SPIRITUAL SIDE) OF OUR SIN.

2. HOWEVER, when we CONFESS the SIN IN OUR LIFE, GOD IMMEDIATELY FORGIVES US AND RESTORES OUR RELATIONSHIP.

a. **1 John 1:9 (NASB)** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

b. CONFESSION of our SINS and ASKING FOR FORGIVENESS are KEY ELEMENTS IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE.

c. UNCONFESSED SIN (AND THEREFORE UNFORGIVEN SIN) SEPARATES US FROM GOD AND GIVES satan AUTHORITY TO ATTACK US BECAUSE THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS IS REMOVED.

F. REMEMBER: GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS WAS A GIFT GIVEN TO US AT SALVATION THROUGH FAITH.

Ephesians 2:4-10 (NASB) But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in

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Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

1. **WE CANNOT LOOSE OUR SALVLTION. HOWEVER... UNCONFESED SIN (AND THEREFORE UNFORGIVEN SIN) SEPARATES US FROM OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.**

Romans 6:8-10 (NASB) Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin **once for all**; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

Hebrews 7:26-27 (NASB) For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the *sins* of the people, because this He did **once for all** when He offered up Himself.

a. **SEPARATION GIVES satan PERMISSION TO ATTACK US.**

b. **OUR CONFESSION AND GOD'S FORGIVENESS RESTORE OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.**

1) **CONFESSION AND ASKING FOR FORGIVENESS OFTEN INVOLVES OUR EARTHLY RELATIONSHIPS, TOO.**

i. **HOWEVER, THAT FORGIVENESS MAY TAKE LONGER.**

G. **IT IS OUR CONTINUING RESPONSIBILITY TO SEEK TO BE RIGHTEOUS AND NOURISH IT WITH GOD'S TRUTH... HIS WORD.**

1. **NOTE: THE ONLY WAY WE BENEFIT FROM GOD'S WORD IS TO READ IT, KNOW IT, MEMORIZE IT, AND QUOTE IT INTO TEMTATION.**

3. **QUESTIONS**