

Title:           **CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**  
Text:            Jeremiah 23:6  
Subject:        *Christ – The Only Righteousness of His People*  
Date:            Sunday Morning—September 27, 2004  
Tape #            Y-43a  
Reading:  
Introduction:

In Jeremiah 23 the Lord God gives a word of judgment against the false prophets who lead Israel into idolatry. Yet in wrath he remembers mercy. Right in the middle of this word of judgment there is a blessed word of free and sure grace to God's elect (Jer. 23:3-6). Let's begin reading at verse 3.

(Jeremiah 23:3-6) "And I will gather the remnant of my flock

- out of all countries whither I have driven them,
- and will bring them again to their folds;
- and they shall be fruitful and increase.
- (4) And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them:
- and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed,
- neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD.
- (5) Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch,
- and a King shall reign and prosper,
- and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.
- (6) In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely:
- and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

*"This is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness."* Our blessed Savior has many names given to him in the pages of sacred Scripture, which we delight to use when speaking of him. He is called the Righteous Branch, the King of kings, Immanuel, Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace.

### **SEVEN NAMES**

Here are seven names by which our Lord Jesus Christ reveals his glorious character and saving operations in the Old Testament.

**CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**

1. **JEHOVAH-JIREH**: — the LORD will provide (Gen.22:14). This is a good description of our Lord's character. He has provided for His people everything necessary to secure our everlasting salvation (I Cor. 1:31; Eph. 1:3). In Christ Jesus there is nothing lacking (Phil.4:19; Rom. 8:32).
2. **JEHOVAH-RAPHA**: — the Lord that healeth thee (Ex.15:26). How suitable is this name to describe the Lord Jesus Christ in taking our sins to Himself and making atonement for them. Isaiah said, "*With His stripes we are healed*" (Isa.53:5; Isa. 61:1-3; Psa. 103:1-4).
3. **JEHOVAH-NISSI**: — the Lord our banner (Ex. 17:15). The Lord's banner over His people is the victorious gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16). We fight the fight of faith under His direction (2Tim.4:7; Mark 16:15). We stand in defense of His truth by His grace (Phil. 1:17,27). God help us to hold up the banner of the gospel of God (Rom. 1:1-3) and to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints (Jude 1:3).
4. **JEHOVAH-SHALOM**: — the Lord our peace (Judges 6:24). Our Lord Jesus Christ made perfect and eternal peace with God through His precious blood atonement (Col. 1:20; I Peter 1:18-20). There is no condemnation in Him (Rom. 5:1; 8:1, 31-35) but everlasting reconciliation (2Cor. 5:17-21).
5. **JEHOVAH-RAHA**: — the Lord my Shepherd (Psa. 23). Our Lord is called the Good Shepherd (John 10:11), the Chief Shepherd (1Peter 5:4) and the Great Shepherd (Heb13:20). Truly, this is a fitting name for such a great God and Savior, Who justified and redeemed all the sheep from their sin and presents them before God faultless (Matt. 1:21; Col. 1:22; Jude 1;24).
6. **JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH**: — the Lord is present (Ezek. 48:35). Our Lord has eternally promised that He would justly redeem His church (Rom. 3:24-26). Let us never entertain any concept that God, Who saved us, would one day abandon or forsake us (John 10:27-30). God has promised never to leave His church (Heb. 13:5; Matt. 28:20; Jude 1:24-25). God saves His people with everlasting salvation (Isa. 45:17; Heb. 7:25; Rev.21:1-6).
7. But, among all the names by which our Savior reveals himself to us, there is none more sweet, comforting, and delightful than this — **JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU**: — "*THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS*" (Jer. 23:6). It is established in Scripture that we cannot produce any acceptable righteousness

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of our own (Isa. 64:6; Rom. 3:9-20). The only hope any sinner has is the Lord Jesus Christ. He perfectly obeyed and honored God's holy law as the believer's substitute (Isa. 42:21; Phil. 3:7-9), thereby freely and sovereignly imputing a justifying righteousness to those who believe (Rom. 4:1-8; Acts 13:38-39).

Savior divine, we know Thy name,  
And in that name we trust;  
Thou art the Lord our Righteousness,  
Thou art Thine Israel's boast.

**GREAT LOSS**

We sustained a great loss by the fall of our race in Adam in this matter of righteousness. We suffered the loss of a righteous nature, and the loss of all legal righteousness in the sight of God. In Adam we all sinned. By Adam's disobedience, man's original character of uprightness was completely wrecked. We all became sinners in Adam's revolt against the Lord God. Because of that fall, when our race went astray from God, speaking lies, every descendant of fallen Adam is born in sin. We come forth from the womb as transgressors, speaking lies, and ever going astray from God, unless God by an act of omnipotent grace steps in to save us from ourselves.

**BLOOD ATONEMENT**

The Lord Jesus Christ came to undo the mischief of the fall for God's elect. He came to restore that which he took not away. By his death upon the cross as our Substitute, the Son of God paid our debt, made atonement for our sins, and redeemed us from the curse of the law by making satisfaction to divine justice for us. By the shedding of his blood, he washed away our sins! His agony and death have forever removed our sins from us. — *“As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us”* (Ps. 103:12). Christ Jesus, by his one sacrifice, has satisfied the penalty of sin his flesh. He, his own self, bore our sins in his own body on the tree. Through the blood of Christ, our sins are washed away, and we are pardoned.

**RIGHTEOUSNESS REQUIRED**

## **CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**

But, it is not enough for us to be pardoned of all sin. True, being pardoned by the blood of Christ, we are without sin in the sight of God. But that is not enough. The holy Lord God requires each of us to keep the whole law perfectly. It is not enough that we be regarded through the blood of Christ as though we did not break it. God requires perfect obedience. It is written, "*Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them*" (Gal. 3:10).

We must be perfectly righteous, or God cannot accept us. We must have a perfect obedience, or God cannot reward us with eternal life. The holy God cannot accept anything less than perfection. — "*It shall be perfect to be accepted*" (Lev. 22:21). Just suppose God would give eternal life and salvation in heaven to a soul that has not perfectly kept his law, to a soul that is less than perfectly righteous. The universe would mock his justice. God's righteous and holy character would be ridiculed.

## **WHERE?**

Where then is the righteousness with which the pardoned sinner may be completely covered, so that God will justly regard him as having perfectly kept the law and reward him for so doing? How can a sinner have such righteousness in the sight of God?

## **NO RIGHTEOUSNESS IN US**

Surely, we are all sensible enough of our own sinful condition that we realize there is no possibility of accomplishing this righteousness for ourselves. — "*By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.*" If righteousness must be produced by us, we are full of despair. Hell must be our eternal portion! We sin every day. We are a constant mass of iniquity. The law of God is too high, too holy, too pure, too perfect for any of us to meet its standard. We cannot keep it. Though we have passed from death unto life, the old Adam struggles for dominion within us. By the force of our lusts, we are still held in the captivity of sin in our members. The good we would do, we do not. The evil we hate, we continually perform. If anything is plain in the Word of God, it is this — There is nothing righteous in any man and nothing righteous can come from man. If we would be righteous, we must have the righteousness of another.

## **NOT SANCTIFICATION**

## **CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Many are of the opinion that the work of the Holy Spirit in sanctification gives us a righteousness by which we may stand before God. I would say nothing to demise the work of the Holy Spirit. He is God. But the work of the God the Holy Spirit in us does not supplement the work of God the Son for us. Those who teach that the Holy Spirit enables us to keep the law, and that God will accept this, are woefully mistaken. In sanctification the Spirit of God does not conform us to the law, but to the Son.

We know that each Person of the blessed Trinity has a branch of salvation espoused to him. And each of the sacred Persons has carried out his work to perfection. We were chosen by the Father. We are called by the Holy Spirit. But the work of our redemption and justification is that which was performed by Christ alone as our Substitute and Surety. We are accepted in the Beloved.

### **CHRIST ALONE**

Our acceptance, therefore, must be by something that the Beloved has done. If we are justified in Christ, then our justification is not the work of the Holy Spirit, but of Christ. The righteousness by which we are accepted and with which we are made worthy of heavenly glory (Col. 1:12) is the work of Christ. According to the Book of God, it is the life obedience of Christ that constitutes that righteousness with which we are clothed before God. His death washed away our sins, and his life covers us from head to foot. His death was the sacrifice to God, and his life is the gift to man, by which all God's elect have satisfied the demands of the law.

**Only in this way is it possible for the law to be honored and our souls accepted by God.** Many who appear to be perfectly clear about the merits of Christ's death, do not seem to understand the merits of his life. Remember, brethren, that from the moment that our blessed Savior broke his mother's womb until the hour that he ascended up on high, he was at work for his people. From the moment that he was seen in Mary's arms, until the moment that he was in the arms of death when "*he bowed his head and gave up the ghost,*" he was performing the work of our salvation.

**The Lord Jesus Christ completed the work of his obedience in his life,** and said to his Father, "*I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do*" (John 17:4). **Then he finished the work of his atonement in his**

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**death.** And, knowing that all things were accomplished, he cried, “*It is finished*” (John 19:30).

Throughout his earthly life, the Savior was spinning the fabric of that royal, priestly garment in which we are, and in his death he dipped that garment in his blood. In his life he was gathering precious gold, and in his death he hammered it out to make for us a garment of wrought gold. We have as much to be thankful for in the life of Christ as we do in his death. In his life, Christ Jesus rendered perfect obedience to the law as our Substitute. And in his death, he satisfied the claims of the law as our Substitute. Therefore, the prophet of God declares of Christ, “*This is the name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.*”

**Proposition:** Here is the message that is set before us in Jeremiah 23:6 — The Lord Jesus Christ is our only righteousness, and it is our joy to confess that he is (1 Cor. 1:30-31).

(1 Corinthians 1:30-31) "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: (31) That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

**Division:** As I studied this text, I gave up all hope of expounding its fullness to you. It bursts with the most blessed truths of divine revelation. I trust that it shall fill your soul with joy, as it does my own; so that, when you leave here this morning you will delight to call the Savior by this name — “**THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**” Therefore, I want to do three things with my subject.

1. I will explain this blessed name of our Savior.
2. I want to encourage you to call Christ by this name.
3. Let us glory in this name by which our Savior is revealed.

## **JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU**

I. First, I will try to show you the meaning of this name by which our Savior is called. — “**THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**”

Today, we attach very little meaning to names. But it was not so in days gone by. In earlier days, a man’s name revealed something about him. And

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this is true concerning our Lord. All of the names by which Christ reveals himself in the Scriptures tell us something about his person, his offices, his work, or his relation to his people. Look then at this name whereby the Messiah, the son of David, our Savior is called, — Jehovah-tsidkenu, “*THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.*”

### **CHRIST IS JEHOVAH**

#### **A. The first thing that strikes me, as I read this text is the fact that Jesus Christ is the Lord Jehovah.**

1. Either the man Christ Jesus is Jehovah, or the Word of God is false and there is no hope for sinners

Let the atheist, the Socinian, and the Arian say what they will. Jesus Christ is himself the Mighty God. I will not make any effort to prove that he is. I simply testify of that which God has revealed, both in the Scripture and in my own experience.

- a. The Scriptures plainly declare the Godhead of our Savior (Ps. 110:1; Isa. 9:6, Tit. 2:13; 1 Tim. 3:16).

(Psalms 110:1) "A Psalm of David. The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

(Isaiah 9:6) "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

(1 Timothy 3:16) "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

(Titus 2:13) "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

- b. Our Lord was crucified because he claimed Godhood (John 5:18; 10:33).

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- c. We fully believe that one who redeemed us from our sins was the Son of God.
2. The whole creation attests the deity of Christ (John 1:3).
3. Providence attests the Savior's Godhead (Heb. 1:3).
4. Certainly, you and I, who have experienced his grace can never doubt his divinity.
  - a. Who less than God could have put away our sins?
  - b. Who less than God could have delivered us from the jaws of hell and brought us up from the pit of corruption, having found a ransom?
  - c. Who less than the omnipresent God could say, "*Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world?*"
  - d. Who less than God could hear and answer the prayers of his people?

## **CHRIST IS RIGHTEOUSNESS**

- B. But our text tells us also that — **Christ is "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS,"** and so he is. What does this mean?
1. It means that Jesus Christ is the incarnation of the law. He is righteousness embodied.

Christ in his life was so righteous, that we may say of his whole life, that it is righteousness itself. Understand me. Christ Jesus lived out the law of God perfectly. While we see God's law written in stone upon Sinai, we see it embodied in the person of his Son.

My dear Redeemer and my Lord,  
I read my duty in Thy Word,  
But in Thy life the law appears  
Drawn out in living characters.

- a. The Lord Jesus Christ never offended the commandment of God in thought or deed.
- b. He loved God with all his heart.
- c. He loved his neighbor as himself.

## **CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**

### **CHRIST IS OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**

2. It is most blessed to know that Christ is himself righteousness, but the joy of our text lies in the fact that — **Christ is our Righteousness**. This is the precious doctrine of sacred Scripture — Christ is our righteousness for justification.

It is in, by, and through Christ alone that we are justified. — *“Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses”* (Acts 13:38-39).

- **The Lord God looks upon all who trust his Son as though we had ourselves lived the life that Christ lived, as though the life of our Savior had been our own.**

God graciously accepts, blesses, and rewards us as though all that Christ did had been done by us, his believing people. God so perfectly imputes the righteousness of Christ to us that we are called by this very name (Jer. 33:15-16).

(Jeremiah 33:15-16) "In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. (16) In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this *is the name* wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness."

- **This is the doctrine of imputation; and it is the very foundation of the Gospel** (Rom. 5:12, 18-19).

(Romans 5:12) "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

(Romans 5:18-19) "Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life. (19) For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

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- We were lost and ruined by Adam’s transgression, by the imputation of his sin to us.
- It is only by the imputation of Christ’s righteousness that we rise to the justification of life.
- **Here is the ground of our confidence and assurance before God — Christ is our righteousness.**
- The Law-Giver has obeyed the law in our stead, and his obedience is sufficient.
- In his death our sin was imputed to Christ.
- And, now in his resurrection life, his righteousness is imputed to us.

He finished the transgression. He made an end of sins. He made reconciliation for iniquity. And he brought in an everlasting righteousness. Christ is the Sun of Righteousness, who has risen with healing in his wings. — *“Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us righteousness.”* — *“He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”*

1. Look back upon your past sins, look upon your present infirmities, and look upon your future errors, and while you weep the tears of repentance, rejoice that there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ, because **Christ is “THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”**
2. Child of God, today you stand before God robed in the garments of Christ. I am not at all hesitant to declare that which makes many squirm. — In Christ we are as holy as our Holy Redeemer.

“With His spotless garments on,  
Holy as the Holy One!”

- We have a better righteousness than Adam had in the garden.
- Christ righteousness is compared to fine linen; and if I wear it, then I am without spot.
- In this robe we are worthy to sit at the wedding feast of the great King.
- In the parable of the prodigal son, this is called the best robe. — It is a better robe than the angels have. — It is a robe that shall never be worn out.

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3. Not only is Christ our righteousness for justification, **he is our righteousness for sanctification, too** (Heb. 10:10-14).

(Hebrews 10:10-14) "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*. (11) And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: (12) But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; (13) From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. (14) For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

- It is only in Christ that God is well pleased.

*"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."* — Not with whom, but *"in whom I am pleased,"* satisfied, delighted. And in Christ, God is well pleased in us.

- It is only through the merits and mediation of Christ our righteousness that God accepts us and the sacrifices that we bring to him (1 Pet. 2:5).

(1 Peter 2:5) "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

- The only claim that we have to the heavenly inheritance is Christ our righteousness. — But, blessed be his name forever, we need no other claim!

### USE THIS NAME

II. So much then for the explanation of our subject. Christ is the incarnation of righteousness. He is our righteousness for justification, and Christ is our righteousness for sanctification. **Now, I want to encourage you use this name, to call our blessed Savior by this his holy name, "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."**

A. **Is there a poor sinner here who is broken over sin, one who longs to be righteous? — Christ alone can make you righteous.**

**CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**

1. You have no righteousness of your own.
2. You can never produce any righteousness for yourself.
3. You must confess your sin and claim the righteousness of Christ by faith. Call him by this name — ***“THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”***

(Romans 10:9-13) "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. (10) For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (11) For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. (12) For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. (13) For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

**B. Children of God, “This is the name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”**

1. **Whenever you sin**, call him – Jehovah my Righteousness. — *“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”*

“In the teeth of all thy sins believe that he is thy righteousness still. Thy good works do not improve his righteousness; thy bad works do not sully it. This is a robe which thy best deeds cannot mend and thy worst deeds cannot mar. Thou standest in him, not in thyself.”

— C. H. Spurgeon

2. **Whenever you are enabled to do anything good**, call the Savior by this name — Jehovah my Righteousness.
3. **Whenever you ask anything from your heavenly Father**, call Christ by this name, Jehovah my Righteousness. — *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.”*
4. **When you come to look death and judgment in the face**, rejoice to call the Judge by this name, — Jehovah our Righteousness.

Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness,  
My beauty are, my glorious dress.

**CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Bold shall I stand in that great day,  
For who ought to my charge shall lay?

**GLORY IN**

III. Now, **let all who trust him glory in Christ our Righteousness.**

O my soul, admire that wonderful reigning grace that has led me to call the Savior by this blessed name – “***THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.***” Rejoice in him. It is written, “*He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*”

A. **Look around you,** my friends, at this band of believers, we are living testimonies of the wonderful works of God’s grace. It is a miracle of grace that we should call him the Lord our Righteousness.

It would be a great wonder if God should cause the demons of hell to call Christ by this name. But, I would be less amazed at that than I am at the fact that he has enabled me to trust Christ and glory in him as the Lord my Righteousness.

“Now, subdued by sovereign grace,  
My spirit longs for his embrace;  
My beauty this, my glorious dress,  
Jesus, ‘***THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.***”

B. We call him the Lord our Righteousness, **because we have experienced his righteousness.** —We have proved that it is true.

1. What peace, joy, and comfort flooded our souls when first we called him Christ our Righteousness.
2. We are reconciled to God, because Christ is our Righteousness.
3. We enjoy the adoption of sons, because Christ is our Righteousness.
4. We have access to the Father, because Christ is our Righteousness.
5. We have the confident hope of heaven, because Christ is our Righteousness.

C. **Let every heaven born soul now call the Savior by this joyful name – “THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS!”**

## **CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**

The angels sing, “Holy, Holy, Holy.” But we have a higher note of praise. We say, “Yes, he is thrice holy. And he is Jehovah-tsidkenu — “*THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS!*”

**Application:** (Isa. 45:22-25).

(Isaiah 45:22-25) "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else. (23) I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth *in* righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. (24) Surely, shall *one* say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: *even* to him shall *men* come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. (25) In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory."

1. Sinner, you must look to Christ alone for righteousness.
2. Brethren, his name is the Lord our Righteousness.
  - a. In the Lord alone do we have righteousness.
  - b. Only by his righteousness are we justified.
  - c. It is only by his righteousness that we are sanctified.
  - d. It is only by Christ, “*The Lord our Righteousness,*” that we are accepted of God.
  - e. Let us now glory only in his righteousness.

Jehovah-tsidkenu,  
The Lord our Righteousness!  
We love to call You by that name,  
Our Savior, Christ Jesus.

Jehovah-tsidkenu,  
The God-Man lived for us,  
Bringing eternal righteousness  
Which God imputes to us.

Jehovah-tsidkenu,  
Our Substitute who died!  
Your blood has put away our sin,  
And we are justified!

Jehovah-tsidkenu,

**CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Your love has won our praise.  
Trusting Your blood and righteousness,  
We're saved by Your free grace!

Jehovah-tsidkenu  
We stand in You alone.  
Our only fitness before God  
Is in our Lord His Son.

Jehovah-tsidkenu,  
The Lord our Righteousness!  
Christ Jesus You alone we call  
*"THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS!"*