

Welcome friends to another broadcast of “Morsels for Zion’s Poor”

Two men went up to the temple to pray, one being a Pharisee and the other being a Publican. *“The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.”* He reeled off, quite an impressive list of accomplishments and in his own mind he considered himself more righteous than the publican. He was satisfied that he had done what was required of him. The Publican, on the other hand, could not escape the knowledge that he had fallen woefully short of all that was required of him, and could find no place of standing before the LORD. *“And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.”* The LORD said that he was “justified” while the Pharisee was not.

“Righteousness” and “morality” are not synonymous. The LORD alone can judge a man to be righteous. The basis upon which HE does so is by imputing the perfect “RIGHTEOUSNESS” of JESUS CHRIST to those whom HE loves. The LORD is faithful to convince and convict HIS of their sin and shortcomings. Their resulting sorrow for their transgressions and an acknowledgement of their unworthiness to stand in HIS presence is an evidence of this work. The LORD taught HIS disciples about the difficulty of those, who are rich in this world’s goods (be it gold or morality), of leaving those things behind to gain the Kingdom of GOD. HE said that with men, such things are not possible but with HIM all things are possible. For it is HE who bestows righteousness according to HIS sovereign purpose.

Saul of Tarsus was a man full of his own righteousness and in his own mind was zealous in his service to the LORD. It was only as the LORD stripped away his self-glorying that he was caused to cry out *“Who art thou LORD”*. When the RIGHTEOUSNESS of CHRIST is revealed, those whom the LORD awakens to behold it can make no claims of their own righteousness and must as the Publican cry out for mercy. Paul looked upon that which he once rejoiced in and counted it all as garbage. *“Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.”*

Thus, we see him expressing *“the voice of rejoicing and salvation.”* It is the same with all of those whom the LORD is pleased to grant the gift of repentance and faith. In the days of Nehemiah, the WORD of GOD was read to the nation of Israel. *“For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law.”* This WORD is sharper than any two-edged sword and pierced their very hearts as the LORD wielded it with power. This weeping is a sign of repentance which is brought about by GODLY sorrow. Yet Nehemiah told them not to weep, but rather to rejoice in the salvation which GOD had already wrought for them. *“Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength.”*

Paul reminds us of the same when he says, *“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.”* The work of the law is a necessary one, due to the innate sin of men, but it cannot minister hope or help to the sons of GOD. The purpose of the law is in bringing repentance, which is not an end in itself, but rather has its perfect work in bringing the sons of GOD to rejoice in the RIGHTEOUSNESS of CHRIST. HE is our SALVATION.

Such rejoicing is meant to occur in the *“tabernacles of the RIGHTEOUS”*. Those “dwelling places” of the LORD are indeed temples of joy. Thus, Paul exhorted the Thessalonians, *“Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.”* Where else can the JOY of GOD’s people be found but in HIM who has *“brought LIFE and IMMORTALITY to LIGHT in the gospel.”* *“(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)”* Cannot all of the sons of GOD now say, *“the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.”* *“Salvation is of the LORD.”* *“We will rejoice and be glad in it.”* *“The LORD our RIGHTEOUSNESS”*. Is CHRIST your righteousness? *“Thy free grace alone,”* #11 **If you would like a free transcript of this broadcast email us at forthe poor@windstream.net**