

Week #18



Psalm 119:137-144

"Do The Next Right Thing"

Gentle. Kind. Pure. Loving. Faithful. Just. Always there. Wise. Forever.

Psalm 119:137-144

Last week we looked at the power of sin. This week we're going to see the power of righteousness. Below are just a few of the verses I found which have the word "righteous" in them. Sometimes the best way to get your arms around a Biblical concept is to look up verses which contain the word, and come to some conclusions from what you read.

Genesis 7:1

Deut. 32:4

Judges 5:11

Ezra 9:15

Job 29:14

Psalm 4:5

Psalm 11:3

Psalm 36:6

Psalm 50:6

Psalm 71:19

Psalm 72:7

Psalm 92:12

Psalm 111:3

Psalm 145:17

Proverbs 10:2, 3, 6, 7, 11, 16, 20, 21, 24, 25, 28, 30, 31, 32

Proverbs 11:4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 18, 19, 21, 23, 28, 30, 31

Proverbs 12:3, 5, 7, 10, 12, 13, 17, 21, 26, 28

Proverbs 13:6

Proverbs 16:8

Proverbs 16:12
Proverbs 16:31
Proverbs 21:26
Proverbs 28:1
Proverbs 29:2
Isaiah 41:10
Rev. 19:8
Rev. 19:11

I didn't list them all....NKJV has 550 verses with the word "righteous" in them!

We're going to begin this lesson with a little inductive exercise - Use the following Bible passage, Proverbs 10, and do the following:

Individually:

1. Highlight the word "righteous" every time you find it.
2. Underline every time you find the word "righteous" contrasted with something else.

Then:

3. Come up with a definition of the word "righteous".
4. Come to some conclusions.

PROVERBS 10

1The proverbs of Solomon:

A wise son makes a glad father,
But a foolish son *is* the grief of his mother.
² Treasures of wickedness profit nothing,
But righteousness delivers from death.
³ The LORD will not allow the righteous soul to famish,
But He casts away the desire of the wicked.
⁴ He who has a slack hand becomes poor,
But the hand of the diligent makes rich.
⁵ He who gathers in summer *is* a wise son;
He who sleeps in harvest *is* a son who causes shame.

⁶ Blessings *are* on the head of the righteous,
But violence covers the mouth of the wicked.
⁷ The memory of the righteous *is* blessed,
But the name of the wicked will rot.
⁸ The wise in heart will receive commands,
But a prating fool will fall.
⁹ He who walks with integrity walks securely,
But he who perverts his ways will become known.
¹⁰ He who winks with the eye causes trouble,
But a prating fool will fall.
¹¹ The mouth of the righteous *is* a well of life,
But violence covers the mouth of the wicked.
¹² Hatred stirs up strife,
But love covers all sins.
¹³ Wisdom is found on the lips of him who has understanding,
But a rod *is* for the back of him who is devoid of understanding.
¹⁴ Wise *people* store up knowledge,
But the mouth of the foolish *is* near destruction.
¹⁵ The rich man's wealth *is* his strong city;
The destruction of the poor *is* their poverty.
¹⁶ The labor of the righteous *leads* to life,
The wages of the wicked to sin.
¹⁷ He who keeps instruction *is in* the way of life,
But he who refuses correction goes astray.
¹⁸ Whoever hides hatred *has* lying lips,
And whoever spreads slander *is* a fool.
¹⁹ In the multitude of words sin is not lacking,
But he who restrains his lips *is* wise.
²⁰ The tongue of the righteous *is* choice silver;
The heart of the wicked *is worth* little.
²¹ The lips of the righteous feed many,
But fools die for lack of wisdom.^[a]
²² The blessing of the LORD makes *one* rich,
And He adds no sorrow with it.
²³ To do evil *is* like sport to a fool,
But a man of understanding has wisdom.
²⁴ The fear of the wicked will come upon him,
And the desire of the righteous will be granted.
²⁵ When the whirlwind passes by, the wicked *is no more*,
But the righteous *has* an everlasting foundation.
²⁶ As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes,
So *is* the lazy *man* to those who send him.
²⁷ The fear of the LORD prolongs days,
But the years of the wicked will be shortened.

²⁸ The hope of the righteous *will be* gladness,
But the expectation of the wicked will perish.
²⁹ The way of the LORD *is* strength for the upright,
But destruction *will come* to the workers of iniquity.
³⁰ The righteous will never be removed,
But the wicked will not inhabit the earth.
³¹ The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom,
But the perverse tongue will be cut out.
³² The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable,
But the mouth of the wicked *what is* perverse.

Definition of "Righteous": _____

Here is a list of the characteristics of God. All of them together add up to "righteousness":

Attributes of God – The Characteristics

Wisdom: "Wisdom is the ability to devise perfect ends and to achieve these ends by the most perfect means." In other words, God makes no mistakes. He is the Father who truly knows best, as Paul explains in Romans 11:33: "Oh, how great are God's riches and wisdom and knowledge! How impossible it is for us to understand His decisions and His ways!"

Infinitude: God knows no boundaries. He is without measure. This attribute by definition impacts all of the others. Since God is infinite, everything else about Him must also be infinite.

Sovereignty: This is "the attribute by which He rules His entire creation." It is the application of His other attributes of being all-knowing and all-powerful. It makes Him absolutely free to do what He knows to be best. God is in control of everything that happens. Man still has a free will, and is responsible for his choices in life.

Holiness: This is the attribute that sets God apart from all other created beings. It refers to His uniqueness, His majesty and His perfect moral purity. There is absolutely no sin or evil thought in God at all. He is like no one else anywhere. His holiness is the definition of that which is pure and righteous in all the universe. Wherever God has appeared, such as to Moses at the burning bush, that place becomes holy just for God having been there.

Trinity: Though the actual word, trinity, is not used in the Bible, the truth of God revealing Himself in three persons is included. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all God, all given worship as God, all exist eternally, and all do things only God could do. Although God reveals Himself in three persons, God is One and cannot be divided. All are involved completely whenever One of the Three is active.

Omniscience: “God possesses perfect knowledge and therefore has no need to learn. God has never learned and cannot learn.” Omniscience means all-knowing. God knows everything, and His knowledge is infinite. It is impossible to hide anything from God.

Faithfulness: Everything that God has promised will come to pass. His faithfulness guarantees this fact. He does not lie. What He has said in the Bible about Himself is true. Jesus even said that He is the Truth. This is extremely important for the followers of Jesus because it is on His faithfulness that our hope of eternal life rests. He will honor His promise that our sins will be forgiven and that we will [live forever with Him](#).

Love: Love is such an important part of God’s character that the apostle John wrote, “God is love.” This means that God holds the well-being of others as His primary concern. For a full definition of love, read [1 Corinthians 13](#). To see love in action, study the life of Jesus. His sacrifice on the cross for the sins of others is the ultimate act of love. God’s love is not a love of emotion only, but also of action. His love gives freely to the object of its affection, those who choose to follow His son Jesus.

Omnipotence: Literally this word means all-powerful. Since God is infinite and since He possesses power, He possesses infinite power. He does allow His creatures to have some power, but this in no way diminishes His own. “He expends no energy that must be replenished.” When the Bible says God rested on the seventh day, it was to set an example for us and our need for rest, not because He was tired.

Self-existence: When Moses asked who he was talking to in the burning bush, God said, "I AM THE ONE WHO ALWAYS IS." God has no beginning or end. He just exists. Nothing else in all the universe is self-caused. Only God. In fact, if anything else had created Him, that thing would be God. This is a difficult concept for our minds since everything else we will ever encounter comes from something other than itself. The Bible says, "In the beginning, God." He was already there.

Self-sufficiency: The Bible says that God has life in Himself (see [John 5:26](#)). All other life in the universe is a gift from God. He has no needs and there is no way He can improve. To God, nothing else is necessary. He does not need our help with anything, but because of His grace and love, He allows us to be a part of advancing His plan on earth and being a blessing to others. We are the ones who change, but never God. He is self-sufficient.

Justice: The Bible says that God is just, but it is His character that defines what being just really is. He does not conform to some outside criteria. Being just brings moral equity to everyone. When there are evil acts, justice demands there be a penalty. Since God is perfect and has never done evil, He would never have to pay such a penalty; however, because of His love, God paid the penalty for our evil deeds by going to the cross Himself. His justice needed to be satisfied, but He took care of it for all who will believe in Jesus.

Immutability: This simply means that God never changes. It is why the Bible says, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."

Mercy: "Mercy is the attribute of God which disposes Him to be actively compassionate." Since God's justice is satisfied in Jesus, He is free to show mercy to all those who have chosen to follow Him. It will never end since it is a part of God's nature. Mercy is the way He desires to relate to mankind, and He does so unless the person chooses to despise or ignore God at which time His justice becomes the prominent attribute.

Eternal: In some ways, this fact about God is similar to His self-existence. God always has been and will forever be, because God dwells in eternity. Time is His creation. It is why God can see the end from the beginning, and why He is never surprised by anything. If He were not eternal, God's promise of eternal life for those who follow Jesus would have little value.

Goodness: "The goodness of God is that which disposes Him to be kind, cordial, benevolent, and full of good will toward men." This attribute of God is why He bestows all the blessing He does on His followers. God's actions define what goodness is, and we can easily see it in the way Jesus related to the people around Him.

Gracious: God enjoys giving great gifts to those who love Him, even when they do not deserve it. Grace is the way we describe that inclination. Jesus Christ is the channel through which His grace moves. The Bible says, "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

Omnipresence: This theological term means "always present." Since God is infinite, His being knows no boundaries. So, clearly He is everywhere. This truth is taught throughout the Bible as the phrase "I am with you always" is repeated 22 times in both the Old and New Testaments. These were even Jesus' words of assurance just after giving the challenge to His disciples to take His message to the entire world. This is certainly a comforting truth for all who follow Jesus.

Attributes of God – The Conclusion

This is the description of the God of the Bible. If we define God in some way opposite of these truths, or if we limit God to only a few of these characteristics, we are worshipping a false god....a god made up from the imagination of mankind. By learning the attributes of God, you may praise God for who He really is and for how each of His attributes impacts your life in a positive way.

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Conclusions:

Now, instead of me answering the questions this week, think through the answers you came up with this week as you read through this passage:

137 Righteous *are* You, O LORD,
And upright *are* Your judgments.

- If the judgments of any judge in our court system would be not “just”, what would happen? Deut 25:1
- How would you define “justice”?

138 Your testimonies, *which* You have commanded,
Are righteous and very faithful.

- What happens when someone is unfaithful in a relationship?
- What is “faithfulness”?
- How do I decide what’s righteous and what isn’t?
- What are some of the commandments of God? How much do you value them?

- **139** My zeal has consumed me,
Because my enemies have forgotten Your words.

- How can we understand God?
- What is our reliable source for information about God?

140 Your word *is* very pure;
Therefore Your servant loves it.

- What can you think of which is very pure?
- What is so great about purity?
- Why would something pure be loveable?

141 I *am* small and despised,
Yet I do not forget Your precepts.

- Is our righteous God too big for the smallest ones?
- How would you describe God's love?

142 Your righteousness *is* an everlasting righteousness,
And Your law *is* truth.

- What does "true" mean?
- How do we know what is true?
- Is there such a thing as absolute truth?

143 Trouble and anguish have overtaken me,
Yet Your commandments *are* my delights.

- How do most of us react to "commandments"?

144 The righteousness of Your testimonies *is* everlasting;
Give me understanding, and I shall live.

- How long is "everlasting"?
- Do you have righteousness?
- God's righteousness is everlasting. Is ours?

Finally, have a prayer time and focus on praying for the people in your life to be righteous....to "do the next right thing". Begin with yourself.

Your Assignment for next week:

- Read **P** "Qoph" – Psalm 119: 145-152
(about one verse per day)
- Answer the following questions as you read through this passage.
 - Memorize Psalm 119:145

"I cry out with my whole heart; Hear me, O Lord! I will keep your statutes."

Psalm 119:145-152

145 I cry out with *my* whole heart;
Hear me, O LORD!
I will keep Your statutes.

146 I cry out to You;
Save me, and I will keep Your testimonies.

- What does the Psalmist's state of mind seem to be? How is he feeling?
- How do you picture the Psalmist praying here?
 - a) Kneeling
 - b) Standing with hands raised
 - c) Prostrate
 - d) Tears running down his face
 - e) Calm
 - f) Joyful
 - g) Desperate
 - h) Going about his daily affairs
 - i) Alone
 - j) In a group
 - k) Feeling sure of himself
 - l) Feeling guilty

147 I rise before the dawning of the morning,

And cry for help;
I hope in Your word.

- When is the Psalmist praying? He needs help. What is his hope?
- What thoughts usually wake you up in the early morning hours?
- Do you ever pray the Word of God during those times?
- How can you be sure the Word is on your mind as you wake?

148 My eyes are awake through the *night* watches,
That I may meditate on Your word.

- What is the Psalmist doing at night?
- How does a person meditate on the Word of God when it is dark?
- Have you ever meditated on the Word of God during the night? What happened in your spirit as you did?

149 Hear my voice according to Your lovingkindness;
O LORD, revive me according to Your justice.

- The justice of God is about to descend on the world of the Psalmist. How can this revive the Psalmist? Why will he need the lovingkindness of God for this process?
- Are you ready for the justice of God to descend on your world?
- What will your reaction be when your house is burned to the ground by those who hate Jesus, and there is no insurance because the economy has collapsed, and there is no justice to be found anywhere because the laws of the land do not protect Christians? Will you:
 - a) Be disappointed that God has not protected you?
 - b) Be angry at God that His justice against sin would affect you, too?
 - c) Be in shock and unable to function?
 - d) Be anxious to get out of your situation, and flee to a safe place with children or friends?
 - e) Be longingly looking for a chance to tell the story of Jesus to those who burned your house down?
 - f) Be praying for a revival in your own heart?

150 They draw near who follow after wickedness;
They are far from Your law.

- What danger is closing in on the Psalmist as he prays?

- Do you still want to be a person of prayer, knowing that the evil ones of the world will begin to draw near?

151 You *are* near, O LORD,
And all Your commandments *are* truth.

- What calms his heart as he sees his enemies approaching?

152 Concerning Your testimonies,
I have known of old that You have founded them forever.

- How does the “forever-ness” of God’s testimonies give us hope as we cry out?
- Think of the many times in history when the author of evil moved to destroy God. What happened? What always happens?
 - a) The original fall of Satan
 - b) The Disobedience of Adam
 - c) The Pride of Babel
 - d) The Sale of Joseph
 - e) The Betrayal of Judas

*(The topics above (a-e) are further fleshed out in a great little book by John Piper, “Spectacular Sins”
– I highly recommend that you read and re-read this book as you move toward a greater life of prayer)*