

Crossroads Baptist Church  
July 2, 2006 10:00  
Romans 3: 21-31  
Romans #15

## “How Do You Like My New Clothes?”

Question: What will take to go to Heaven?

Answer:

- A. Live a perfect life according to the Law.
- B. Have your sins forgiven.
- C. Have the righteousness of Jesus.
- D. “A” only
- E. “B” and “C”

The answer is E – both B and C.

God is righteous, holy and pure. In order for me to have a relationship with you fully then I must be as you are. Not like you in outward form only, but like you in body, soul and spirit.

But I am not that. Instead, I am just the opposite.

Romans 3:23 – I have sinned and continually come short of the glory of God.

Isaiah 54:6 – All our righteousness is as filthy rags.

As we have seen in previous messages, I may think at any one time that I just have one ticket against me and I believe that the Judge should overlook it, but in reality I don't just have one ticket, I have 3, 223 other tickets. But that would only be that low if I had sinned only one time a week for my lifetime. The total for sinning one sin a day would be 22,630.

So, the first thing I need to do is throw myself on the mercy of the court and ask for forgiveness.

But forgiveness alone will not get us into Heaven. Forgiveness makes me clean and pure from the past. But I just said that God is righteous. How can I ever be as righteous as He?

God cannot accept an unrighteous man. You need the righteousness of God to be accepted by God.

The requirement of Heaven and a relationship with God is righteousness.

But how?

Romans 3: 20 – not by the works of the flesh.

But by faith – Romans 3:22

We can have the righteousness of Jesus!!

This is the MEANS by which that righteousness is attained and appropriated. It is not that faith has merit. It is rather the merit of the OBJECT of our faith that brings this righteousness.

Implications of this?

### 1. It is a gift not attainable by our works.

We have already seen that this word *righteousness* is highly misunderstood in our day. Often it is associated with behavior. If people are behaving in a right way, we say that they are behaving righteously. But in the book of Romans *righteousness* does not directly touch on behavior. It is not what you *do*; it is what you *are!* That is even more important, because your behavior stems from what you are. The gift Paul is talking about, the gift from God, is that of a righteous standing.

This righteousness is apart from the Law. That is to say, it is not something that you earn; it is a gift. You cannot earn it by doing your best to be pleasing to God, and anybody who approaches God on those terms has already failed. There is no way anyone can measure up to God's standards. The sweetest, dearest little old lady that you know of cannot make it, because God knows her heart. Nevertheless, God has found a way to give us that gift, and therefore it is apart from the Law; it is not something we can earn.

We can't become more righteous by our acts. We are as righteous as we'll ever be.

Ephesians 2: 8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; <sup>9</sup>not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

### 2. I am greatly loved and accepted by God through Jesus Christ.

This gospel, therefore, is dealing with something tremendously significant. It does not have to do only with what happens when you die. I think this is one of the reasons why hundreds of churches today are half-empty; so many people do not know that self-worth is what the gospel is all about. Young people today are looking for a ground of worth. They want to be loved.

What God is offering is a gift of righteousness -- his own perfect righteousness, that cannot be improved upon, a perfect value. By faith in Jesus Christ, he gives us a sense of worth and acceptance, and there could be no better news to mankind

### **3. I am as accepted and loved as I will ever be.**

I am as righteous in Jesus Christ as I will ever be.

Romans 5:17 <sup>7</sup>For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

II Cor 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Romans 8L:1 There is therefore no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness.

I dare not trust the sweetest frame

But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

On Christ the solid rock I stand

All other ground is sinking sand.

All other ground is sinking sand.