



EASTER – ONE ACT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

By

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“Therefore, as through one man’s offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.” Romans 5:18

What an amazing statement! One act of righteousness on the part of Jesus Christ was enough to bring Justification of life for all men. What was this “righteousness” that brought about such outstanding results for the human race?

“Righteousness” is an English translation of the Greek word *dikaionatos*. It means “a righteous act or deed.” The root word means “right, just.” Jesus did the “right” thing and it brought life for all people.

Jesus always did the “right” thing during His life on earth. Every step He made, every word He spoke, every action He took was “the right thing.” He told His disciples: “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.” (Matthew 5:17). Jesus came to earth to do everything “right.” He followed the rules. He stayed focused on doing the “right” things. All of His “right” actions were leading to one act of righteousness that would spell “L-I-F-E” for all people. That moment was the **Cross**.

Jesus endured one of the most horrible deaths known to man: crucifixion. People beat Him, whipped Him, mocked Him, spit on Him, cursed Him, nailed Him to a cross, stabbed Him, cut Him, and left Him to hang for hours in the hot sun. Jesus could have commanded an army of angels to free Him and destroy every enemy in Jerusalem, but He didn't. Jesus did the "right" thing.

At the end of His time on the cross, Jesus asked for something to quench His thirst, then said, "It is finished." What was finished? The task at hand. Jesus had finished what His Heavenly Father had sent Him to accomplish: to die for the sins of mankind. That was the one righteous act Paul wrote about many years later.

"Righteousness" is about doing right things. It's about finishing those right things. It's about obeying the One who sends you to finish those right things. Jesus is our GREAT EXAMPLE of doing what's right. What came from Christ's obedience? What came from His "one act of righteousness?"

"Justification that brings life for all men."

The Greek word for "justification" is *dikaioein*. Notice the similarities? The words for "righteous act" and "justification" come from the same root word: *dikaio*. "Justification" is the act of pronouncing someone righteous. It takes a righteous act on the part of a righteous person to

pronounce someone else righteous. In the case of Christ, He was the righteous Person Who performed the righteous act of shedding His blood for us. In that righteous action, He provided a way for human beings to stand justified before the Supreme Being.

Jesus did the tough thing. He went the distance. He kept His eye on the goal before Him. He didn't stop when death stood before Him. His followers didn't want Him to go to the cross. Peter tried to stop Him, but Jesus did the right thing. He didn't waver. He remained steadfast to complete the work His Heavenly Father had given Him.

You and I received the benefit of His righteous act. Christ's death paid the penalty for our sin. God's anger against us was cooled because Jesus did what was right. Paul wrote that we became "the righteousness of God" because of Christ's act.

"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Corinthians 5:21

What do we learn from this? Right actions lead to right results. One of my favorite sayings from Total Quality Management (TQM) is: "Do right things right the first time." That's what Christ did. He did the right things. He did them right and did them right the first time.

Christ is our example. You and I are not in a position to die for the sins of anyone, but we can do “right things right” every day. Doing right things for others will have right results. Christ is “in” us doing the Will of His Father. God wants to bless the lives of others through us. That’s what He did with Christ. He blessed the world through Jesus. He wants to bless the world now through the Spirit of Christ Who is in us.

Tens of millions of Christians live on this planet. If each one of us would obey the Spirit of Christ in us, we could do hundreds of millions of righteous acts every day. We would make a big difference in the lives of millions of people every day. It may be saying a kind word to a friend. It may be sharing a word of encouragement with a neighbor. It may be spending quality moments with our children. It may be listening to the pain of a fellow worker and sharing the insights of Christ. It may be praying for someone’s loss. It may be speaking boldly in the community about doing the right thing. It may be telling someone about Christ’s love for them and how He did the “right thing” for them when He died on the cross centuries ago.

We never know what “right thing” we do in a day is going to have a deep and lasting effect on the life of another person. But God does. Our responsibility is to do right things. The Spirit of Christ in us knows what those right things are. He will do right things through us because He is in us.

Right actions lead to right results. Listen to the Spirit of Christ in you and you will do the right thing.

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