

## **ROMANS: RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH FROM START TO FINISH**

### **X. Righteousness Applied To Life And Service, Romans 12:1-15:13**

#### **E. Righteousness Applied To Anticipating Our Destiny**

**(Romans 13:8-14)**

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. The theme of the epistle to the Romans is that God's righteousness is available to man by faith from start to finish (Romans 1:16-17; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 441).
- B. This belief is often not accepted in Christendom: Some claim that one must have faith plus works to be justified, and others say that though we are justified by faith, we cannot righteously live a godly life by faith.
- C. Having explained the theology of God's righteousness applied to justifying believers in Christ, Paul showed how that righteousness applies to one's life and service as a Christian in Romans 12:1-15:13.
- D. Romans 13:8-14 shows how God's righteousness is to be applied to anticipating our destiny as believers:

#### **II. Righteousness Applied To Anticipating Our Destiny, Romans 13:8-14.**

- A. Prior to being justified by God, we believers were without spiritual hope, living for false or empty goals.
- B. However, having been pronounced righteous by God and thus destined by His mercy to live eternally with Him in glory, we have a righteous, glorious destiny that should deeply affect our way of life.
- C. Romans 13:8-14 thus shows how our positional righteousness in Christ is to be applied to anticipating our glorious, righteous destiny with God, and the Apostle Paul makes this matter very practical (as follows):
  - a. First, Paul provided practical guidelines on living righteously before God and our fellow man, v. 8-10:
    - i. Having mentioned in Romans 13:6-7 the believer's financial obligations to pay taxes he owes to the civil authorities, Paul broadened his application to include the believer's obligation to pay any financial debts he has to others, be they lending institutions, businesses or individuals, Rom. 13:8a.
    - ii. Indeed, we should owe no man anything except to love each other, a debt we can really never fully pay, a debt that when addressed fulfills the righteousness of God's law, Romans 13:8b.
    - iii. Referring to the social commandments in the Ten Commandments of not committing adultery, not murdering, not stealing, not coveting, etc., Paul explained that they are summed up in the act of loving one's neighbor as himself, Romans 13:9. Adultery harms the innocent spouse, murder harms the victim and the victim's family, stealing harms the owner and coveting harms the security of the victim who is coveted, so love causes one not to commit such harms against his neighbor.
    - iv. Paul added that love does no wrong to one's neighbor and doing no wrong to one's neighbor fulfills the righteousness of the law as a believer relies on the Holy Spirit, Rom. 8:4. (Rom. 13:10)
  - b. Having provided these practical guidelines on living righteously, Paul pointed his readers to the motivation to heed such practical guidelines – a focus on their glorious, sinless destiny in heaven, Romans 13:11-14:
    - i. We believers must realize that the time has come metaphorically to “wake from sleep,” that is, to come out of a state of being insensitive to sin in our lives, Romans 13:11a; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to Romans 13:11.
    - ii. The sense of urgency of ceasing to be insensitive to sin in living should be motivated by realizing that the “future culmination of our salvation at the return of the Lord is nearer every day,” Romans 13:11b; Ibid. Since every day that passes brings us closer to the rapture when we will be delivered from our sinful natures and the corruption of our mortal bodies to gain the glory of God in the new body so as to live forever with a righteous God in His presence, it is only logical that a believer should cease living in sin in this life that so greatly contrasts with God's righteousness.
    - iii. Paul then metaphorically urged his readers to realize that the night of this present state is nearly spent, that the day of the glorious eternal future is at hand, that we should put on the armor of light and live righteously, Romans 13:12. In practice, Paul explained that we should live righteously as people of the coming “daytime,” not indulging in lustful orgies, drunkenness, sexual immorality, sensuality, quarreling, and jealousy, but metaphorically to put on the Lord Jesus Christ in making no allowance for living by means of our sinful natures for their gratification, Romans 13:13-14.

**Lesson:** *We believers should live righteously in view of our future glorification with Christ by doing no harm to others, but by relying on the Holy Spirit's power to boycott our sinful natures that we might not indulge in its lusts.*

**Application:** *May we focus on our destiny with God to live by the Spirit's power in alignment with that destiny.*