

Preaching Thru the Bible in One Year # 7 of 48: Keys to Bible Understanding.

Introduction: What are we doing in Preaching Thru the Bible in one Year?

The simple and straightforward answer is to both understand the Bible and to appreciate the consistent flow of the Bible; in fact of the 12 Top Topics of the Bible derived from the Old Testament quotes in the NT, the third Topic is "Consistency of the Bible". And let us never forget where we are going and where we have been. Topic number One, the Living God of the Living has been covered in the first four messages, recall that each of the 12 Top Topics has four sermons to make it in one year, and of the 4 parts for Top Topic number 1, the Righteousness of God and Man, we come today to the third and fourth parts of that Top Topic by doing something a little different: in this message only the topical paraphrase is considered and then next week the textual part will be covered with some in the original Hebrew language. (Actually both English and Hebrew to reach both Gentiles and Jews for the Bible of Christ, naturally allowing the quotes in the New Testament to explain the equivalent in the Old Testament.)

12 Top Topics	Sermons Preached	Bible Coverage
1. The Living God of the Living.	1-4	Genesis - Exodus 19
2. Righteousness of God and Man.	5-8	Exodus 20 - Numbers
3. Consistency Witness of the Bible.	9-12	Deuteronomy
4. God, Man, and the Son of Man.	13-16	Job and Psalms 1-15
5. The Resurrection.	17-20	Psalms 16-35
6. God's Wisdom.	21-24	Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Psalm 36-77
7. The Gospel.	25-28	Psalms 70-150
8. Listening More Important than Sacrifice.	29-32	I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, Jonah, Joel, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah 1-39
9. What Happened to the Jews as the Chosen People of God?	33-36	Isaiah 1-39
10. Salvation of God (One Baptism).	37-40	Isaiah 40-53
11. The New King of the New Israel.	41-44	Isaiah 54-66, Micah, Nahum, Jeremiah 1-30
12. The Living God wants Others to Live.	45-48	Jeremiah 31-52, Habakkuk, Ezekiel, Zechariah, Malachi

2. Previous Keys to Bible Understanding from Messages 5 and 6.

(1). **Key to Bible Understanding # 2-1: Love of God and neighbor were in the 10 commandments of the law from the very beginning, stated but not fully understood by all, even as today; and when Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount and other places that He came to fulfill the law not destroy, it was to fulfill the love of God and fellow man and of righteousness.**

NOTE: *Very few realize that the royal law of love was in the Law of Leviticus all along:*

“If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you do well...” (James 2:8)

“Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.”(Leviticus 19:18)

(2). **Key to Bible understanding #2-2: Certainly while much of the law like the 10 commandments did not change from the OT to the teachings of Jesus and the NT, many of the rules and regulations, temple worship and sacrifices, were nailed to the cross as the temple at the Crucifixion of Christ was rent from top to bottom. By the way also the old covenant and the priesthood was replaced by the Priesthood of Christ as the old covenant was obsoleted by God Himself.**

(3). **Key to Bible Understanding #2-3: Except for a few example lives like Moses, David, Abraham, for the most part the history of God’s people of Israel is a dark and discouraging story of dismal failure, ups and downs with the breaking of the old covenant between God and man; but starting about midway through the Bible with Psalms, Isaiah, and other of the Prophets, God reveals more fully two great rays of hope for the future: (1) Christ as the Messiah Who will die on the cross for the sins of the world, Jews and Gentiles; and (2) a new way of righteousness legally, through faith in the cross, and actually through the new heart and new mind from the Holy Spirit. {By the way another great ray of hope is of with a new people of Jews and Gentiles, also a New Jerusalem with a new earth and a new heaven, and yes that is also at the end of Isaiah, chapter 66.}**

(4). **Key to Bible Understanding #2-4: Among the most religious of God’s people and leaders religious customs and traditions had and do come to replace the commandments and teachings of God, sometimes by interpretations not of the ASPI type and sometimes just by custom and tradition; today and then among the religious of God’s people there can be a lot of false and vain worship of lip service that is considered vanity in the sight of God and Christ.**

(5). **Key to Bible Understanding # 2-5: Acts of love, love being the fulfillment of the law and righteousness of God, like the extra mile, the other cheek, and giving, are to replace the Law of Moses and of the original nation of Israel where the only sense**

of justice is "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth and a life for a life". Once again, the proper interpretation of the 10 commandments as love for God and love for neighbor, like original written and intended, takes the place of detailed regulations on eye for eye, since the commandments were not properly carried out and interpreted in the first place. If in doubt, go by what Jesus taught, knowing that it came from God where Jesus lived before His short life on earth. Justice and righteousness, of God and of Christ and for Christians, goes far beyond in challenge and in rightness that the simple justice of the law that requires one for one, eye for eye and tooth for a tooth or life for a life.

(6). Key to Bible Understanding 2-6: as Paul explains, the ASPI, the golden calf incident of Exodus 32 we have many understandings of idolatry as committed by the first of God's people and also as by God's people today-(1) Although all of God's people in the wilderness were rescued by way of the sea by God, also lead by the cloud in the wilderness, and ate the same manna from heaven and spiritual food, and drank of the water from God including the spiritual water of Christ, "with most of them God was not pleased" (I Corinthians 10:5) {that is, God's people who do not please God}; (2) God scattered most of their bodies in the wilderness; (3) in the Bible God gives us these bad examples of His own people as examples not to follow (I Cor 10:6); (4) that we like them "should not lust after evil things" like they lusted, for example when they complained about the manna, quail, and water and coveted those delicacies like watermelon which they had in Egypt; and (5) when they played after eating and drinking the Bible as the Word of God, I Corinthians 10:7, as "idolaters"; (6) some of God's people in the wilderness committed "sexual immorality" and 23,000 of God's own were slain in one day in the wilderness; (7) some tempted Christ, being destroyed by serpents; (8) some of them complained and were destroyed. All of these examples of the Falling Away in the wilderness, and of course the violations of all the righteousness of God and of the commandments, and the consequences thereof with judgment from God are written in the Word "for our admonition"; and for the caution that whoever things that He stands as a chosen of God could still fall and fell.

(7). Key to Bible Understanding # 2-7: Christians and church members are to seek to be holy and righteous based on the character of God the Maker, that He is holy. God expects of us, made in the image of God, what He Himself is; and what He originally intended for us to be as made in the image of God.

(8). Key to Bible Understanding # 2-8 in the context of Galatians 3's interpretation of the law and of Leviticus 18:5: (1) absolutely no one is justified by the law in the sight of God (Galatians 3:11); (2) the just, or justified, must live not by law but by faith (3:11 and Habakkuk 2:4); the law is not faith and faith is not the law (3:12 and Leviticus 18:5); (3) Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, death and etc., having in the cross become a curse in our place (3:13).

(9). Key to Bible Understanding # 2-9: Whether you are reading from Leviticus, Proverbs, Psalms, or Matthew, the best explanation of what you find in one book, chapter, and verse is what you find in the rest of the Bible. This is the principle of Bible hermeneutics called keep Bible in the total context, the corollary of which is “Read your Bible, it will throw a lot of light on the commentaries”; or we can say what is in one part of the Bible, since the origin in all cases is the same as from God, will shed light on what is in other parts of the Bible, and vice versa.

2-3: More from the Bible on the Righteousness of God and Man.

While this second Top Topic of the Bible is based on and centered around the three books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, like with some of the other books of the Bible where quotes overlap and reinforce each other, and in the name of good Bible exegesis and hermeneutics {the science of biblical interpretation with books by Bernard Ramm on THE SCIENCE OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION}, where we keep our understanding of the Bible in the total context of the Bible, we must expand to other Scriptures on Righteousness as we did at the beginning of this chapter.

Key to Bible Understanding # 2-9: Whether you are reading from Leviticus, Proverbs, Psalms, or Matthew, the best explanation of what you find in one book, chapter, and verse is what you find in the rest of the Bible. This is the principle of Bible hermeneutics called keep Bible in the total context, the corollary of which is “Read your Bible, it will throw a lot of light on the commentaries”; or we can say what is in one part of the Bible, since the origin in all cases is the same as from God, will shed light on what is in other parts of the Bible, and vice versa.

The Righteousness of God and Man.

(1). Psalm 111 provides us a good introductory description to the Righteousness of God.

As we quickly skim through Psalm chapter 111, you will notice the connection between works and righteousness. In fact the phrases are almost interchangeable between “the works of God” which are great in 111:1 and “His righteousness which endures forever” in 111:3. Several things are emphasized about the works of God in this Psalm: (a) The works are great; (b) God’s work is honorable (v3); (c) His work is glorious (v3); (d) It is wonderful how “God has made” (v4) His wonderful works to be remembered, and we immediately think of three ways, in the Word of God and in the works of Creation and Salvation; (e) the works of His hands are verity, obvious a derivative of truth; (f) God’s works are justice.

Key to Bible Understanding # 2-10: Whether you study the works of man or God, of the righteousness of God or man from the Bible, you will find that works and

righteousness are closely connected so that in most cases you are talking about the works of righteousness, man or God.

Manifestations of the works or righteousness of God are given throughout the Psalm: (a) His works manifest themselves in greatness whether you talk about the works of Creation, of salvation, or of the creation and preservation of the Bible; (b) His righteousness and works endure forever, that is they are everlasting, and we must modify the works of Creation in the sense that while the old earth and old heavens will be shaken apart and consumed with fire to make room for the new earth, an earth and heaven the creations of God do remain {and if you read carefully Revelation 21 on the new heaven and new earth, where first there is no more sea, then you start to realize the possibility except for the New Jerusalem that is lowered to the existing Mount Zion that the new earth will possibly exist where the water of the seas and oceans were melted by the fervent heat}; (c) God's works of righteousness include "graciousness" and "compassion" (v4), in fact they "are full of graciousness and compassion" {by the way all the holiness and righteousness of God is to be emulated by Christians as they were emulated to the very tee by our author and finisher of the Christian faith, the Lord Jesus Christ}; (d) God's works of righteousness are seen in that He gives food to the people who respect Him (v5); (e) We see the works of the righteousness of God in that He always has in mind the covenant and covenants that He makes with His own people (v5); (f) God works righteousness as He declares, primarily through Jesus, the Prophets, and the Bible—alias the Bible—the power that is in those works like salvation, Creation, and creation and preservation of the Bible, specifically however according to verse 6, this power is declared as God's people receive the heritage of the nations, something that will fully happen on the New earth after the Second Coming of Christ; (g) God's works of righteousness are seen in the realization that "all His precepts are sure" (v7), stable and to be relied on more than gravity, inertia, and gravitational attraction; (h) God's works of righteousness are "done in truth and uprightness" (v8); (h) We dare not neglect redemption, another word for salvation with a particular emphasis on in salvation how God bought us back from sin and servitude to sin even though at Creation we had originally belonged to Him (v9); (i) God is righteous and God works because He has "commanded His {everlasting} covenant forever"—it like God is immutable (v9); and (j) the works of righteousness of God include that all about His character and Name, that He is holy and awesome. {In the previous introduction to holy and holiness from Leviticus, some effort was made to distinguish between holiness and righteousness, but I think that we see that whether we are talking about the holiness and righteousness of God or man, righteousness has the emphasis on the works—more like personality—while holiness has the emphasis on character. The difference is what we do are what we are. And it is hoped that some distinction between actual righteousness and sanctification has been gleaned, recalling that

“saints” as a common word in the Bible for Christians is derived from sanctification, and that sanctification is the actual process started with the regeneration of the new birth and finalized when we see Christ as He is. In short, sanctification is becoming holy.}

Key to Bible Understanding #2-11: Sanctification like character is becoming holy while righteousness—actual, not legal and real—like personality and started with the regeneration of the new birth is the works of righteousness. Years ago my habit was to divide righteousness into LEGAL and REAL; but since when God declares us righteous because of faith in Christ that is as real as an righteousness can be even though more a legal righteousness as described in the atonement, so that the two categories of righteousness for man should be (1) Legal and Real, and (2) Actual {for our continuing Bible study on righteousness, you will find that “actual” is a Bible word and from Romans.

NOTE: The first covenant which God made with Abraham was the “everlasting” covenant, when God Himself preached the Gospel to Abraham and Abraham believed; the second covenant was the Old Covenant of the Old Testament given by God through Moses and between God’s original people of Israel; and the new covenant of the New Testament was actually the fulfillment of the Everlasting Covenant, one sealed with the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ in atonement and crucifixion.

Key to Understanding Bible # 2-12: The Everlasting Covenant with God made with Abraham, that is “God preached the Gospel to Abraham” and Abraham believed, a righteousness by faith was the first covenant of God with man, and which by the way according to Romans included us as Gentiles since Abraham is our father by faith; the second covenant was the old covenant between God and Israel given through Moses, often violated and broken by God’s own people, and was inadequate in that it did not include the reality of the new birth {this became known about Jeremiah and Ezekiel}; and the new covenant of the New Testament based on the atonement and blood of Christ replaced the old covenant; however in reality it was a fulfillment of the everlasting covenant.

(2). We comprehend something of the righteousness of man in Proverbs 12. What we read in Proverbs 12 are some selected thoughts from God on the “righteousness of man”. If you were teaching and preaching on this chapter of the Word of God, you might want to entitle it “The Righteousness of Men”.

(a) First Proverbs 12:3 established a contrast between righteousness and wickedness, allowing us to quickly see that they are opposites, then presents the first characteristic of a righteous man as “a root that can not be moved” {the wicked can not be established in the sight of God} (v3); (b) The righteous man has “right thoughts”, of course

consistent with “as a man thinketh in his heart so is he” and the statements from Jesus about it is the things that come out of the heart that defile a man, the opposite also being true (v5); (c) The righteous man has a “house that will stand” while the wicked are overthrown and disappear, of course this speak of end judgment and for eternity (v7); (d) A righteous man is humane and regards the life of animals (v10); (e) the root, and surely we read character here, “of the righteous yields fruit” (v12); (e) the righteous have the characteristics, or resulting personalities, to “come through trouble” as compared to the wicked that gets trapped in the transgressions of his own lips, again of judgment and eternal judgment (v13); (f) since the righteous man declares truth then it is a work or declaration of righteousness (v17); (g) when you look at the long range and end results of the life of the righteous, you will find that “no grave trouble will overtake” them (v21); (h) the righteous are to chose his friends careful (v26); and (i) “In the way of righteousness is life”, where the path does not include death.

NOTE: It behooves us to learn, achieve, and seek the WAY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, which we will continue to do! Does this not remind you of Jesus’ statement in the Sermon on the Mount, and a conclusion of several other statements in the Sermon of Matthew 5 and 6, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness....”

“Righteousness” in the Sermon on the Mount. No doubt you have read, studied, even taught and preached the Sermon on the Mount, or Matthew 5-7 quite often; but have you realized how prominent the word “righteousness” is while still be hidden in all the other teachings of Jesus that have gained lasting impressions.

(1). Jesus with a message and more teachings from God in heaven, where He previously lived, gives a promise of blessing or happiness to those who will hunger and seek after the RIGHTEOUSNESS of God (Matthew 5:6), the blessing being when God and Christ witness this dedicated effort of hungering and thirsting after righteousness of a promise that “they will be filled”! Later in the Sermon you will find promises that with the proper priority in life of God and righteousness over bread and things, that the bread and things as necessary {not the Gospel of Prosperity} will be added; but here the spiritual bread takes the place of the physical bread and necessities as the guarantee from God and Christ comes that there will be filling. There will be no hunger in the life of any child of God for righteousness when that righteousness is eagerly and seriously sought!

(2). Now with righteous manifestations of good works, there is no immunity from the persecutions of the world. Like Jesus said later, “If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you.” However again while the promise and guarantees are not from persecution, the guarantee is that the persecuted will inherit the kingdom of heaven. In fact, you would have to say that the kingdom of heaven is especially designed for the persecuted. Of course from the book of Revelation we learn that there are two

resurrections: (a) the first immediately after death as with spiritual bodies they go to heaven to be with God and Christ; and (b) the second resurrection where the spirits of just men made perfect finally at the Second Coming of Christ receive their resurrected bodies. (Matthew 5:10)

(3). Christ sets very high standards for the righteousness of man in Matthew 5:20 as he tells the children of God that “their righteousness must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees.” Oh yes, these men were the religious leaders of the day, some of the most religious that have ever lived in prayer, worship, and works; but it was and is not enough according to Christ. Later as we come to Romans, the book on Righteousness of Man and God, we will see that they “being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, had not submitted to the righteousness of God” which is by faith.

(4). “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Matthew 6:33) The priority of life must be for God and righteousness.

Previously we saw in Psalm 111 how the righteousness of God relates, almost synonymously, with the works of God: now we see how in Galatians 5 that the works of man relates to the righteousness of men, of course this is not LEGAL and REAL righteousness but actual.

(1). We have previously looked at Leviticus 19:18 which is quoted by other books of the NT besides in Galatians 5:14, and we will look at it again, including an expanded look at the book of Leviticus with its message of separation from the other peoples in the lands of Egypt and Canaan {separation from other Gentiles and normal Gentile behavior has always been a goal and demand of God for His own people}.

“For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ (Galatians 5:14 and Leviticus 19:18)

NOTE: Later we will see where the Apostle James in James 2:8 quotes this same verse from Leviticus and calls it “the royal law”. Don’t take it too lightly because Pastor James is getting at the practice of discrimination based on clothing, status, and money, a common and accepted practice of unrighteousness and sin and wickedness today. {Yes, while it is true that the American Democratic Faith prohibits discrimination based on race, religion, and creed, the Faith of the Lord Jesus Christ prohibits respect of any persons, calling it a sin as serious as murder or adultery.}

A little perspective of the context of Leviticus 18 and 19 is in order here! I would choose to summarize the title of Leviticus 18, “Do not According to the Doings of Egypt and Canaan” while some Bibles like to call it “laws on sexual morality”, and that is there also. Several key points of some of the verses helpful for our continued study of

righteousness and love are: (1) God spoke to Moses, and Moses spoke to the children of Israel that "I am the LORD your God" {right, sounds like the beginning of the 10 commandments first of Exodus 20 and then the review for the new generation in Deuteronomy 6; and indeed you will find a lot of similarity between the 10 commandments and the subject matter of Leviticus 19 which, in fact, I like to entitle "Commentary on the Ten Commandments"}; (2) God admonished them through Moses (v18:3) not to do according to the doings of the land where they dwelt in Egypt or in the land of Canaan where they were going {stated in another way God told them "not to walk in their ordinances"}; (3) From verse 4 and the context of Leviticus we realize that coming from God were four categories of requirements for righteousness—commandments like in the ten commandments, conditions of the old covenant between God and Israel, "judgments", and "ordinances" {sometimes the word "statutes" is used in the place of ordinances, so that the last two categories of requirements of right or righteousness from God become statutes and ordinances}; (4) Previously under the Laws of a Holy God we looked at Leviticus 18:5,6 {and as quoted in Galatians 3:12}, "My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them", however we did not warn you of the Bible in Romans to come which essentially states that the law and laws came after the everlasting covenant was given to Abraham and the world, that the law of Moses and of God was given later to make sin obvious and promote guilt; (5) God's people of Israel are not to "defile" themselves with any of these things of immorality and lack of rightness mentioned, and as practiced by the other nations around them—God is casting them out before them (v24)—what is happening is that the land is "vomiting out" the inhabitants of the land; (6) The people of Israel are to keep the ordinances of God in order that they will not commit the "abominable customs" of the inhabitants, also in order that they will not defile themselves, the opposite of course, is to be "holy" like God of character and righteous in the works of personality (v30).

Key to Bible Understanding # 2-13: The argument of Romans 3 is to contrast a righteousness by law and a righteousness apart from the law which we will come to later in a closer look at Romans 3 on righteousness; however now is the time in the study to declare according to the Word of God that the law, alias ten commandments, even statutes, ordinances, and judgment {alias God's character and value system of holiness} in order: (1) that every mouth might be stopped as it claimed innocence from blame, Paul will call it our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ and righteousness by faith; and (2) that the whole world, Jews and Gentiles, might become guilty before God.

"Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." (Romans 3:19)

And as we see from the Galatians 3:12 quote of Leviticus 18:5,6, amplified and explained in the larger context of Romans and Galatians, a miniature of Romans, is that if indeed a man could keep all the laws, statutes, ordinances, and judgments of God to perfect, this would be a way to live eternally; however, it is not possible, and lest you doubt that look at the number of moral Americans and church members who discriminate against the poor and those of lack of status.

The Description of Righteousness by Faith of Romans 4.

{Hopefully you read the book of Romans as recommended in Top Topic #1, and it should be easy for you to read now only the fourth chapter of Romans.} Due to limitations of time and space, we can only hit some of the highlights of this chapter as relate to a description of Righteousness by Faith. {Recall that the problem with many religious people, even secular, of the world is that they attempt to establish their own righteousness in the sight of God, therefore never get around to a righteousness by faith.}

(1). The original promise of the everlasting covenant to Abraham, and his seed of faith which includes us, was before the law, being a “righteousness of faith” (Romans 4:13).

(2). It is “of faith” and “by grace”. (Romans 4:16) Never have the little words of “of” and “by” meant so much.

(3). Righteousness is legally “accounted” to us as it was to Abraham when God sees faith. (Romans 4:22)

(4). Another way to say righteousness is accounted to us, in the words of Romans and the Bible is to say that “righteousness is imputed to us who believe” (Romans 4:23,24). While accounted makes it clear that the necessary legal bookkeeping in heaven has been done for us to be declared righteous, it seems in imputed to get to us here on earth. Either way, you know it is by faith and of grace, a gift of righteousness.

(5). In Romans 4:25 you have two great words of salvation, the atonement not stated but implied in the Christ “was delivered up for our offenses” and directly stated in the “justification”.

The Gift of Righteousness of Romans 5.

(1). Surely you see “the gift of righteousness” as a Bible phrase as in Romans 5:17.

(2). You also see some definition of the great word of salvation, “justification”, in Romans 5:18 where there is by faith a “justification of life” and based on another great act and word of salvation, “atonement” without the use of the word itself, as the contrast is made between original sin of Adam and Eve where the condemnation of

God passed on to all humanity because of this one man Adam, and then by the one God-man, Christ, and His one act in crucifixion the atonement passed upon all men, “even so through one Man’s righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.”

(3). By the obedience of one God-man, Christ, “many will be made righteous” (5:20), the MADE RIGHTEOUS is once again a good phrase to describe the imputation or accounting of righteousness to man. It is legal but it is real as it comes from God and through Christ!

Some of the big words of salvation—such as justification, redemption, propitiation, as related to the righteousness of God and man in Romans 3.

(1). Two of the great words of the great salvation of God are in Romans 3:24, namely justification and redemption, as we read “being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”.

(2). God through “propitiation” by the blood of Christ, and through faith

GOD DEMONSTRATED HIS OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS: it was necessary according to Paul and the Bible for God to demonstrate that He was still the very nature of righteousness in spite of the fact that he had overlooked all those sins of all those people in past history, “because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed”. In one of the greatest of all statements of the Bible that describes God as “JUST AND THE JUSTIFIER”, in Romans 3:26 God through JESUS’ atonement and “through faith” demonstrates in the present His own righteousness.

(3). There is in Romans 3 a short description of the difference between RIGHTEOUSNESS BY LAW and RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH. {You will find that difference set out quite often in Romans, especially in Romans 10 where it says that the righteousness by faith does not try to reach up to heaven to be like God by works, etc.}

Righteousness by Law prohibited by: whatever the law says to you or does not say to you, it does say that any and all who chose to be under the law and live under the law do not achieve any righteousness in the sight of God but rather [1] have their mouths of self-justification stopped, and [2] become guilty in the sight of God. (Romans 3:19,20) There is no justification in the sight of God by the “deeds {works} of the law. In fact, just the opposite “by the law is the knowledge of sin”.

Righteousness of God apart from law (Romans 3:21-26): [1] this new righteousness of God apart from law is “now revealed” {obviously in the time of Christ where it was fully demonstrated and through Christ and the Apostles made clear}; [2] of course it was witnessed to as the way of salvation and the everlasting covenant by the Prophets in the OT and the Apostles and Jesus in the NT, by the “law and the Prophets”; [3] it is a

righteousness of God through faith in Christ; [4] to all and for all who “believe”, there is no difference between Jew and Gentile, only a difference between righteousness by law {which is impossible} and righteousness by faith; [4] Justified by the grace of God and through redemption {another great word of salvation which literally means that God bought us back, although we originally belonged to Him by Creation, from bondage to sin and Satan and death} in Christ—you have to watch the little words in the reading of Romans like the “in” which is “in Christ”, the “through” in through the justification that is in Christ Jesus and the “being” and “freely” in “being justified freely by His grace”; and [5] God set forth Christ as a PROPITIATION {another great word of salvation} by His blood {the blood of Christ being another short descriptive word for the atonement}.

Characteristics of Righteousness and Unrighteousness as presented in Romans 1. {Yes, as stated previously Romans has, as some commentators like Dr. Wolber of Ouachita Baptist has entitled his commentary, the Righteousness of God. However once again you must read Romans 1 as in no way can we do justice to the content now.}

(1). In Romans 1:16,17 the “Gospel of Christ” is introduced as: (a) the power of God demonstrated all the way to salvation {you have no doubt that Paul is about to make the greatest treatise of all on the salvation of God as based on the proper interpretation of the OT quotes on the subject, revealed and witnessed but never fully explained or understood until men could see Christ}; (b) for everyone who believes, Jew and Gentile; (c) through it is the “revelation of the righteousness of God” {yes righteousness and salvation is the subject of Romans}; (d) the Gospel is a way of salvation from “faith to faith”, as it starts in initial faith and continues in faith; and (e) with a quote from Habakkuk 2:4, “The just {and justified} shall live by faith”, we are assured once again that the everlasting covenant by faith was there in the OT all along. It was really there so God could overlook the sins of the past, being both the just God and the justifier of all who believe .

(2). We can see much about what lived or “actual” righteousness is by what is not, it is not the opposite of “unrighteousness” of Romans 1:29-32. All of these are the very opposite of the nature of God and inspired in men by Satan and the “spirit within us that lusteth to envy” (James 4:5): (a) sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; and with the subsequent description of the character of men where there is unrighteousness: (a) whisperers, (b) backbiters, (c) haters of God, (d) violent, (e) proud, (f) boasters, (g) inventors of evil things, (h) disobedient to parents, (i) undiscerning, (j) untrustworthy, (k) unloving, (l) unforgiving, and (m) unmerciful.

