**How Man Can Become Right with God**

**Introduction:**

At the end of one’s life, the only truly important thing is whether one is right with God. Nothing else ultimately matters. But how can I know if I’m right with God? The message of Paul’s letter to the church at Rome is: “How man can become right with God.” Romans 1:16-17 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith.’ ” NKJV This letter reveals the plan by which this can happen.

**Body:**

1. **Righteousness**

* Righteousness in the New Testament sometimes refers to a characteristic of God; sometimes to doing what is right; and sometimes to a right standing with God, being justified or acquitted. Romans 6:16 “Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?” NKJV
* The Book of Romans reveals this plan through which man can be justified, made right with God. **Brother Wendell Winkler** rightly states that this plan involves several parts:

1. A problem Man sinned and there is nothing he can do about it by himself.
2. A person Man’s need was met by the coming of a Savior.
3. A prescription In response to God’s grace, man must obey the gospel, meet the conditions. Romans 1:5 “Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name.” NKJV
4. A pardon When man does obey the gospel, he is pardoned, justified, acquitted of sin.

Romans 4:7-8 “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered; Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin.” NKJV

1. A place We enter Christ, His body, the church. Romans 6:3 “Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?” NKJV
2. A purpose We bring glory and honor to God. Romans 16:26-27 “but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith – to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.” NKJV

* Righteousness, then, brings freedom.

1. **Freedom**

* Freedom is a beautiful word. But to fully appreciate it, we must know its opposite – slavery. The worst kind of slavery is slavery to sin with Satan being our Master. Romans 6:16 “Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?” NKJV
* But through Christ and our response to His righteousness, we were made free from sin – from its practice, guilt, and punishment. Romans 6:1-2 “What shall we say them? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?” Romans 5:1 “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,” Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” NKJV
* This freedom is not free. There are conditions which must be met. Note that these do not nullify or cancel out faith or grace. Romans 6:17-18 “But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.” NKJV One must “obey.” Romans 2:8 “but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness – indignation and wrath.” NKJV Obedience and freedom are not opposites, but rather go hand-in-hand. This obedience must be from the heart, the intellect, the will, and the emotions. We are to obey “that form of doctrine” – the pattern of teaching. Just as Christ died, was buried, and resurrected, so we must die to sin, be buried in baptism, and be raised to walk in newness of life. Romans 6:4 “Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” NKJV
* No longer slaves if sin but now slaves of God. Romans 6:22 “But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.” NKJV This freedom brings responsibility – sanctification.

1. **Sanctification**

* To sanctify is to separate from the profane; to dedicate to God; to cleanse and purify; to be holy. Romans 6:22 “But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.” NKJV
* Christians have been called out of the world and thus are not to be worldly. Romans 12:1-2 “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” NKJV Worldliness is one of the greatest problems in the church today.
* Christians are to make a complete dedication of themselves to the Lord. Commitment and loyalty are needed instead of indifference and lukewarmness.
* Christians are to be holy, like our God. “Be holy, for I am holy.” I Peter 1:16 “because it is written, ‘Be holy, for I am holy’ ” NKJV Characterized by good, not evil. “Conformed to the image of His Son.” Romans 8:29 “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” NKJV

**Conclusion:**

Are you right with God? Are you in right standing with God? Have you obeyed that form of doctrine?

Bobby Stafford November 5, 2017