

A LIFE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

A LIFE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS - PART 9

As we looked at in the last resource, the first work of God is to believe. To carry and be constantly growing in a living conviction of who God is and what He says, and to have a life that is the reflection and demonstration of this first work called 'believe'.

In this resource we will look at the next divine work of God which is to love Him, with all our heart, soul, mind and strength and love others as He loves us. The second work of God is intertwined with the first work of God and they can not be separated. We see this very clearly in 1 John 3:23-24 and we must pay special attention to this and not just fob it off as some unreal expectation that can't be met.

1 John 3:23-24 This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us. The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

One can only accomplish the second work of God the way God instructs, through entering into and living from the first work - believe. Failure to enter and grow in the first work, is to not be able to live out the second work and the second and the first work are COMMANDMENTS from the Father.

Through the believing comes the abiding and through the abiding comes the divine enablement and empowerment to love God and mankind the way we are commanded to. This then asks the question around our abiding in Christ and what it means to truly have Christ abide in us and us in Him.

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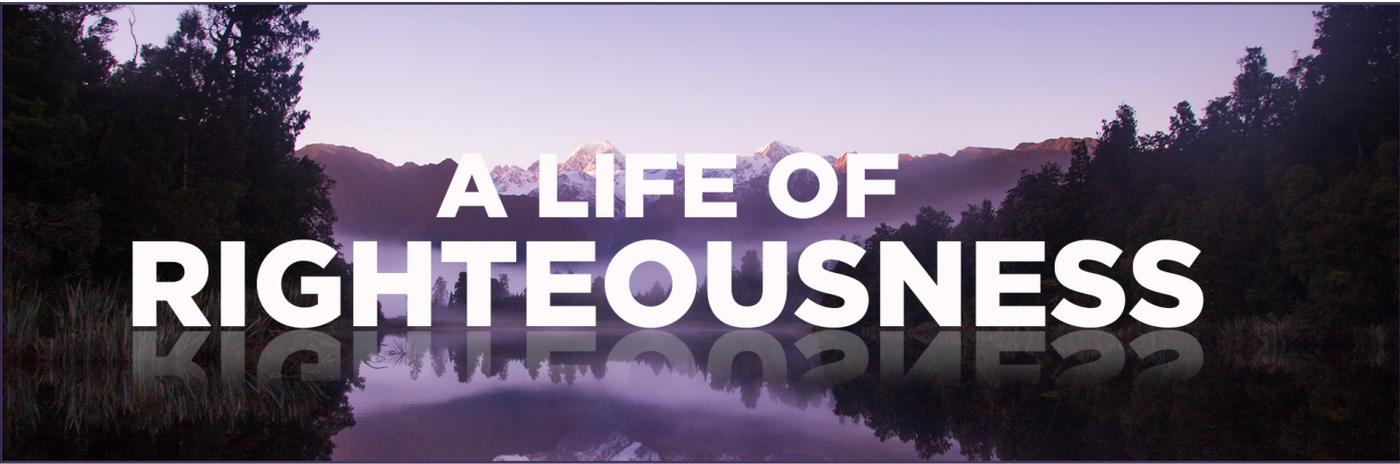
1 John 2:6 the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

If we say we abide in Christ then we will walk in the manner in which He lived, which was love. This is to keep the commandments. To not be able to live this out and say you abide, is nothing short of a lie. We are kidding ourselves.

It is impossible to keep God's commandments of loving Him and others the way He does, in our humanity. This is what religion is all about. Mankind trying to live out God's eternal standard through his own strength, capacity and ability, exerting all this time, energy, resource and commitment into something that is futile and produces no eternal life or living. It is all done in vain as Psalm 127:1-2 declares.

This is what I call the Divine set up. We are divinely set up and commanded to do something we can not do, to show us our absolute need and dependency on God and God alone. This revelation of this reality is to bring us into a posture of spiritual despair, where we fall upon the Cornerstone, and have the spirit of pride which operates in all humanity, broken into a 1000 pieces, never to be put back together again. This is what true spiritual repentance is.

2 Corinthians 7:9-10 I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, so that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death.



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It's from this brokenness of spirit through repentance, that the Spirit pours into us a 'poor in spirit beatitude', which is the first being attitude of Christ. It says, "Blessed are those who are poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." All the other kingdom be attitudes are defined by the FIRST one, and so failure to have this spirit of pride within us broken into pieces, never to exist again, and have it replaced with the spirit of humility, will see us unable to live out the second work of God.

It's not rocket science, its very clear. Just like man couldn't keep the 10 Commandments without the power of the Spirit, neither can man keep the 2 Commandments without the power of the Spirit. This is the exact reason why Peter couldn't lay his life down when confronted with the reality of knowing Jesus, and fulfilling what he said he could do. He denied Christ because he hadn't yet received the love of Christ.

When one hasn't yet received the love of Christ, because one's spirit of pride has not been broken into pieces, one can not love as Christ. This is why Peter also couldn't love his fellow disciples when given the instruction by Christ.

John 13:34-35 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

This was an epic fail on Peter's behalf, but this epic fail would lead him to his epic crushing and it would be in the crushing, that the potential for this brand new life in Christ would be discovered.

For all those who have journeyed through God's spiritual process of true repentance, having the spirit of pride smashed and replaced by the spirit of humility, these followers now find themselves being able to keep the Commandments of God, demonstrating the first and second work of God to the measure they are in Love.

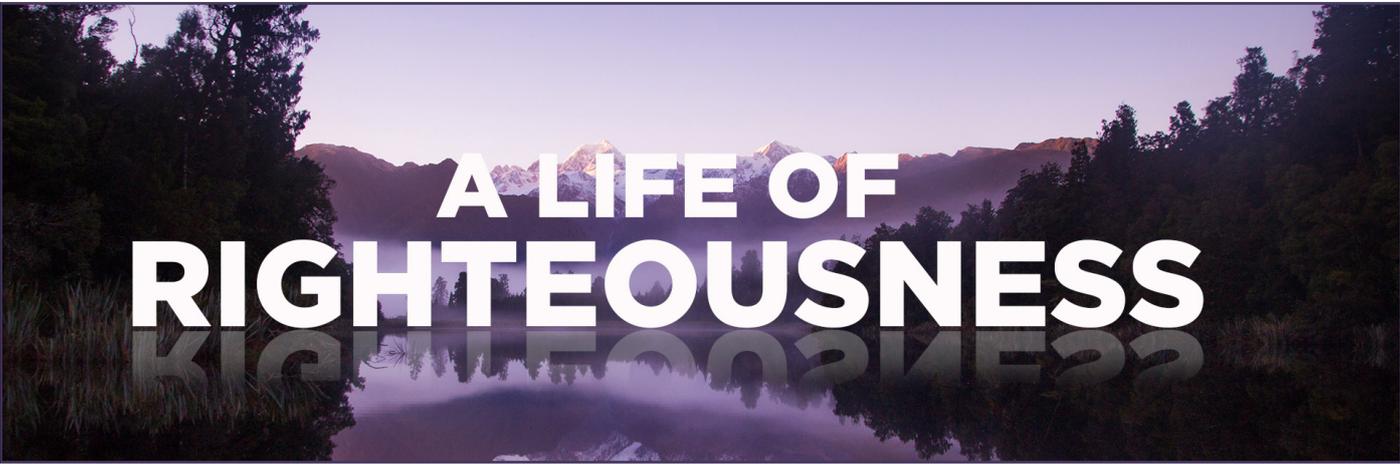
1 John 4:12 No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.

If we love one another God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. This is an absolute statement of truth that one is either in or not. There is no half way point or mid ground. One either is or isn't.

This passage is almost identical to 1 John 3:23-24 from above. If we love one another with the love of Christ, we are abiding in Christ and can keep and demonstrate this second work in God, hence we are living out this life of righteousness.

QUESTIONS

1. Why is this kind of repentance that produces spiritual brokenness so pertinent and vital to being able to live out the second work of God?
2. Why was it impossible for Peter to lay his life down for Christ and not be able to keep the Commandment of loving his fellow disciples?
3. What are the damaging consequences for the body and the world, when followers of Jesus are not in the



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first or second work of God?

4. How much of God's love do we have operating within us and how is it empowering you to live as Christ?

ACTION POINT: What action point do we need to take away from tonight and apply to our lives?