

The Bottom Line (Romans 9:2-3)

Introduction: “*There are only two religions in the world.*” (Martin Luther)

I. THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF MAN: Good Works

- A. What the world counts as righteous:
 - 1. Fighting for a just cause
 - 2. Showing care for others
- B. The world’s view leads to false beliefs, like:
 - 1. *We deserve special treatment from God*
 - a) “Faith Theology” - *the desperate farmer from north of Seattle*
 - b) But what about **Romans 3:23**?
 - 2. *We get right with God by our deeds*
 - a) But what about **Matthew 5:48**?
 - b) And surely let’s see **Isaiah 64:6**
 - c) This caused St. Paul great anguish for his Jewish brethren (**Rom. 9:2-3**)
- C. The world’s view leads to a false and precarious sense of security
 - 1. How can we ever be sure we are “good enough”?
 - 2. How can we be sure our deeds are the “right ones”?
 - 3. We end up (literally) on a dead end street (**Proverbs 14:12**)

II. THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD: Faith

- A. God renews His promise to Abraham (**Genesis 12:2 and 15:5**)
- B. God creates faith in Abraham’s heart
 - 1. Abraham believes God (**Gen. 15:6**)
 - 2. On the basis of faith’s object, Abraham is counted righteous (**Gen. 15:6**)
- C. Righteousness is God’s act, not man’s!
 - 1. It is given apart from “work-righteousness” (**Romans 4:1-3**)
 - 2. It is based on God’s gift, received by faith (**Ephesians 2:8-9**)
- D. Abraham believed that:
 - 1. God would provide him with a son (**Rom. 4:18-22**)
 - 2. God would send His Son, the Saviour (**John 8:56**)

III. HOW CAN YOU BE RIGHTEOUS?

- A. Just like Abraham: by trusting faith (**Gen. 15:6**)
- B. Faith’s object is God’s promise in Jesus
- C. This promise has been kept! (**Rom. 4:20-25**)

Conclusion: *It all depends on who is holding your hand*