

## The Pursuit of Righteousness

08/19/2018

Sunday AM

### Scripture: Proverbs 15:9

#### Introduction

- Last week we discussed **Creation** from a biblical perspective.
- What the Bible says, and what the world says about the beginning of life are two very different beliefs.
- You have to make up your mind which one you want to submit to.
- This morning we will look at **The Pursuit of Righteousness**.
- This is another subject where the Bible and the world don't see eye-to-eye.

### Proverbs 15:9

“The LORD detests the way of the wicked but he loves those who pursue righteousness.”

- “LORD” in the Hebrew is יהוה which is YHWH and this four letter name is called a tetragrammaton.
- It is pronounced as Yahweh or if using the Latin and English pronunciation it is Jehovah.
- Jehovah – “The existing One”
- The verse states that the “LORD detests the way of the wicked.”
- The Hebrew word for “detests” is *tow`ebah* which means “something disgusting,” “an abomination.”
- So God is sees “the way of the wicked” as disgusting. What is “the way of the wicked?”
  - **Colossians 1:5-9**, “<sup>5</sup>Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: **sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry**. <sup>6</sup>Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. <sup>7</sup>You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. <sup>8</sup>But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: **anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips**. <sup>9</sup>**Do not lie** to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices <sup>10</sup>and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.
  - **Galatians 5:19-21**, “<sup>19</sup>The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: **sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; <sup>20</sup>idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions <sup>21</sup>and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like**. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.
- The Bible makes it abundantly clear throughout its pages what “the way of the wicked” looks like.
- Even with this type of clarity, people walk in these ways and still assume they are “righteous” before God.
- “The LORD” is the “existing One,” He has been here since the beginning of time and will always be here.
- **Do you think you can fool Him?**
- Surely, we do not want to be looked at by our Heavenly Father as disgusting, do we?
  
- The verse goes on to say, “but he loves those who pursue righteousness.”
- The Hebrew word here for “loves” is *'ahab* which means “to breath after or desire,” “to love.”
- The Hebrew word for “pursue” is *radaph* which means “to run after (usually with hostile intent; chase, put to flight, follow, hunt, (be under) persecute(-ion, -or), pursue(-r).”
- Pursue indicates a vigorous search, not anything laid back.
- After learning these two definitions, we can conclude that God loves and desires someone who runs after and chases righteousness.
- So what is righteousness? It is the Hebrew word *tsēdaqah* which means “rightness.”
- What would someone pursuing “rightness” act like?
  - **Colossians 3:12-14**, “<sup>12</sup>Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with **compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience**. <sup>13</sup>**Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you**. <sup>14</sup>And over all these virtues **put on love**, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”

- **Galatians 5:22-26**, “<sup>22</sup>But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,** <sup>23</sup>**gentleness and self-control.** Against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup>Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup>Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. <sup>26</sup>Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.”

- The Bible is equally as clear on “righteousness” as it is on “wickedness.”
- If we are to be “righteous” then we are to be seen as right before God.
- The only way we will really reach such a position in this life is through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.
- However, Proverbs does not tell us that God only loves those who reach righteousness, it says those that “pursue righteousness.”
- So the question for this morning is, **Are you pursuing righteousness?**
- Before answering that question, makes sure to re-read the definition that was given earlier.
  
- Too often people believe that they are doing right by God, by simply trying.
- “Trying” is a relative term.
- Are you really trying to please God when we act the opposite of what He commands every day?
- Are you really pursuing righteousness if you are doing so slowly?
  
- To sum up all of this, God’s expectation of us is that we vigorously chase after righteousness and that we stop doing those things in our life that are not right.
- He has given His life so that we have salvation and He has sent us the Holy Spirit to have power over sin.
- Not only does God have expectations that we will live our lives differently, but so does the world.
- **How can you be a witness to those that are around you, if you are not living a life that they can model after?**

**\*\*Challenge for the Week\*\***

**Examine yourself throughout the week and ask, “Am I pursuing righteousness right now?”**

**Wednesday Night Bible Study**

**Study of the Book of Romans**

Romans 1:8-15