

Righteousness can be simply understood as the credit or merit for having “done right” in the past. Just as a man is called a “good man” who practices “goodness.” The Jews told Moses **“And it shall be OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us”**

(Deut 6:25). The Bible states that John the Baptist’s parents

“were both righteous before God,”

How?

“walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless”

(Luke 1:6). This was the plan of salvation during most of the Old Testament.

This obedience had to be kept until death or it would be erased (see Ezek 18:23-24), and at best, it could only get a man as far as Abraham’s bosom—the place of comfort (Luke 16:22-25). For centuries men tried and failed.

Indeed, the prophet Isaiah had declared **“all OUR righteousnesses are as filthy rags”** (Isaiah 64:6). Peter would later confess that the Jewish law was

“a yoke...which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear”

(Acts 15:10). Before a pure and holy deity who can measure up?

The law was a **“schoolmaster to bring us to Christ”** (Gal 3:24), and to show our imperfection alongside his absolute perfection (Rom 3:10, 20). Christ’s righteousness is perfect because he faced the same temptations as us **“yet**

without sin”

(Heb 4:15). A believer’s hope is in Christ’s righteousness being credited to him by faith (Rom 3:21-26, II Cor 5:21).

“And being found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.”

(Phil 3:9)