

RIGHTEOUSNESS AND RAGS

SCRIPTURE:

You meet him who rejoices in doing righteousness, who remembers You in Your ways. Behold, You were angry, for we sinned, we continued in them a long time; and shall we be saved? For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; and all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. (Isaiah 64:5-6). He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21).

MATERIALS LIST:

- (1) Dirty shop rag

SONG: "Make Me New"

LESSON:

I have a whole basket of shop rags. I use them for all sorts of projects, especially cleaning projects. I use them over and over again on paint, oil, grease, dirt, grim, etc...Then I wash them. They end up clean, but still stained. The stains do not come out. They are permanent. No matter how well I wash them, the stains stay.

Isaiah speaks of himself and the children of Israel. He says "all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment..." (Isaiah 64:6). In other words, no matter how "good" they were, they were still dirty in sin. Our righteousness (doing right before God) is not good enough to save us. You can be the best person in the world and still fall way too short. Why? Because you are still a sinner. You are still stained. You are still in need of a Savior. There is no amount of good you can do to achieve true righteousness by yourself.

Then what is the answer? The cross. The blood of Jesus is the only thing that can remove our stains. This is why Paul said, "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). By ourselves, we'll never be righteous. Romans 3:9-10 says, "What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; as it is written, 'There is none righteous, not even one.'" We ALL are like those stained rags.

Only Christ can remove the stains of my sins. And when I am born again, that is, born of the water and of the Spirit (immersed), then I am washed whiter than snow! The same prophet Isaiah said, "Come now, and let us reason together," says the Lord, "Though your sins are as scarlet, they will be as white as snow" (Isaiah 1:18a).

Righteousness in and of yourself can't happen. Righteousness in and of Christ is the only way!

PRAYER: Thank you, Father, for making us righteous by the blood of Christ!

MAIN MESSAGE:

In and of ourselves, our sins make us unclean. There is not enough good that we can do to be right with God. But through Christ, we are made clean. We are made righteous by the blood of Jesus.