

Year of Supernatural Overflow  
Series: Righteous Reset  
Title: The Switch

5-3-2026

I'm about to tell you something that will either set you free or offend you.

There are two kinds of righteousness. And most Christians have the wrong one.

They've spent years trying to be good enough for God, trying to earn his approval, trying to become righteous through their behavior.

But here's the problem.

You can't become what you already are. Let me explain.

There's a righteousness that comes from you. what you do, how you act, how good you are,  
that's called self-righteousness.

And then there's a righteousness that comes from God.

What Jesus did, who he is, what he accomplished. That's called  
the righteousness of God in Christ.

And here's what most Christians don't understand. You can only have one, not both. You're either trying to establish your own righteousness through your works or you're receiving God's righteousness through faith in Christ.

**Romans 10:3** Since they did not know the righteousness of God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.

Did you catch that? Going about to establish their own righteousness.  
That's most Christians.

They're working, striving, trying to be good enough, but they're ignorant of God's righteousness.

They don't know that God has already made them righteous through Christ.

So, they spend their whole lives trying to earn something that's already been given.

Now, let me ask you a question.

When you pray, how do you approach God?

Do you come boldly, or do you come apologizing for how unworthy you are?

Do you come as a son, or do you come as a beggar hoping he'll listen?

Because the way you approach God reveals which righteousness you're operating under.

If you're operating under self-righteousness, you'll always feel like you're not good enough because you're not.

Your works will never be good enough to make you righteous before God.

**Isaiah 64:6** says, All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.

But if you're operating under God's righteousness, you come boldly because it's not about what you did.

It's about what Jesus did. And what HE did was enough.

**Romans 3:21-22.**

This is one of the most powerful scriptures in the Bible about righteousness.

Paul writes, But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.

<sup>22</sup> This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile,

Now, let me break this down. The righteousness of God without the law.

Without that means it has nothing to do with your obedience to the law, nothing to do with your performance, nothing to do with how good you are.

It's the righteousness of God without the law, which is by faith of Jesus Christ.

Not by your faith in Jesus, by the faith of Jesus, his faithfulness, his obedience, his finished work unto all and upon all them that believe.

You don't work for it. You believe and receive it.

"Until you know you're righteous, you'll always approach God as a beggar instead of a son or daughter."

And that's the problem with most Christians.

They don't know they're righteous.

So, they keep trying to become righteous. But you can't become what you already are.

Here's what happened at the cross. Jesus took your sin. You received his righteousness.

**2 Corinthians 5:21** says, God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

He was made sin.

You were made righteousness, not becoming, not working toward, made, past tense, already done.

So, when you stand before God, you don't stand in your righteousness.

You stand in his righteousness.

And HIS righteousness is perfect because it's not based on what you did.

It's based on what Jesus did.

Now, here's the question you have to answer.

Are you trying to establish your own righteousness through your works?

Or are you receiving God's righteousness through faith in Christ?

And because you can't have both, one is based on you.

The other is based on him.

One leaves you insecure and always striving.

The other gives you confidence and rest.

Today, I'm going to show you the difference.

And by the end of this message, you'll understand why trying to be righteous is the very thing keeping you from righteousness.

Now, let's go deeper into **2 Corinthians 5:21** because this verse reveals the entire gospel in one sentence.

Paul writes, God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

This is what I call the great exchange.

Jesus took what was yours, you received what was his.

Let me show you what happened.

Jesus who knew no sin was made sin.

Not that he sinned, but that he became the sin offering, he took your sin upon himself.

Every lie you told, every angry word you spoke, every lustful thought you had, every failure, every mistake, every rebellion, he took all of it.

**Isaiah 53:6** says, We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

That means your sin was transferred to Jesus.

He carried it. He bore it. He paid for it so that you wouldn't have to.

But here's the second part of the exchange.

That we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Not that we might try to be righteous, not that we might work to become righteous, that we might be made righteous.

Now, catch this.

The same way Jesus was made sin, you were made righteousness.

He didn't actually become a sinner.

He was made sin as a legal transaction.

In the same way, you didn't actually become perfect in your behavior, but you were made righteous as a legal transaction.

It's a judicial act.

God the judge declared you righteous, not because you earned it, but because Jesus paid for it.

**Romans 5:19** says, For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

This is what religion doesn't understand.

Religion says, "Do good works and you'll become righteous." But the gospel says, "You've been made righteous. Now do good works from that position."

See the difference? One is trying to get righteous.

The other is living from righteousness.

"The righteousness of God in Christ is not something you attain. It's something you obtain.

You don't attain it by working. You obtain it by believing.

You don't earn it. You receive it."

Now, here's why this matters.

If you think righteousness is based on your performance and you'll never have confidence before God, because you'll always know you messed up somewhere.

You'll always remember that sin you committed.

You'll always feel like you could have done better.

And every time you pray, you'll wonder if God is even listening.

But when you understand that righteousness is based on Jesus' performance, everything changes.

You don't come to God based on how well you did. You come based on how well Jesus did and how well did Jesus do perfectly.

**Hebrews 10:14** says: For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

Not making you perfect, not you'll be perfect someday.

Perfected, past tense, already done.

Now, let me ask you this.

If God already declared you righteous, why are you still trying to convince him you're good enough?

If Jesus already perfected you, why are you still working to become perfect?

If the judge already ruled in your favor, why are you still defending yourself?

Here's the truth. You're not trying to get righteous.

You're learning to believe you already are.

**Romans 4:5** says: However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness.

To him that worketh not.

You're not working for righteousness.

You're believing God who declared you righteous.

And when you believe it, you'll start acting like it.

Not to become righteous, but because you are righteous.

That's the difference.

Religion works to become.

The gospel works because you are.

"You can't act like a conqueror until you know you are one.

You can't live righteous and until you know you are righteous and you are not because of you, because of him."

Why Christians struggle.

Now, let me show you why most Christians struggle with this.

**Philippians 3:9** . Paul is writing about his own journey from self-righteousness to God's righteousness.

And what he says here will expose what's happening in your life.

Paul starts by listing his credentials. Verse 5-6.

**Philippians 3:5-6** circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee;

<sup>6</sup> as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

Faultless/blameless in the law.

That means Paul kept the rules.

He followed the commandments. He did everything right.

If anyone could be righteous by their own works, it was Paul.

But then he says something shocking in verse 7.

**Philippians 3:7** But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ.

Everything he worked for, everything he achieved, everything he built, he counted it as loss.

Why? Because he discovered something better. Look at verse 8 to 9.

**Philippians 3:8-9** What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ

<sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.

Paul had a choice.

His own righteousness or God's righteousness.

His works or Christ's work.

His efforts or Christ's finished work.

And he chose God's righteousness.

And now here's the key phrase, not having a righteousness of my own.

That means Paul had to let go of his own righteousness.

He had to stop trusting in what he did.

He had to stop leaning on his own performance.

And that's the hardest thing for religious people to do because self-righteousness is pride.

It's saying, "Look at what I did. Look at how good I am. Look at how much I've sacrificed."

And pride doesn't want to let go.

Pride wants to say, "I earned this." But God's righteousness requires humility.

It's saying, "I didn't earn anything.

I don't deserve anything.

Everything I have is because of what Jesus did. And that's hard for the flesh to accept.

This is why most Christians are STUCK.

They want God's righteousness, but they're not willing to let go of their own.

They want to add Jesus to their works, and they want to say, "I'm righteous because of Jesus and because I'm a good person."

But it doesn't work that way.

**Romans 11:6** And if by grace, then it cannot be based on works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.

It's either grace or works, not both.

You can't mix them.

So, here's the question.

What are you trusting in?

Your prayer life? Your Bible reading, your good deeds, your church attendance, your tithing, those things are good, but they don't make you righteous.

Righteousness is a gift.

**Romans 5:17** For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!

The gift of righteousness.

You don't work for a gift and you receive it.

And until you stop working for it, you'll never receive it.

Until you let go of YOUR righteousness, you'll never walk in HIS righteousness.

Until you stop trusting in what you did, you'll never rest in what Jesus did.

"The moment you begin to trust in your own works, you step out of grace and back into the law, and the law can't make you righteous."

**Romans 3:20.** Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin.

The Bible says NO ONE. That includes you.

So, stop trying, stop working, stop striving, and start receiving.

Receive the righteousness of God as a gift.

Not because you earned it, but because Jesus paid for it.

And when you receive it, you'll finally have rest.

Because you're not carrying the burden of trying to be good enough anymore. Jesus already was good enough.

And his righteousness is now yours.

Now, let me show you what this looks like practically.

Because knowing you're righteous is one thing, but living from righteousness is another.

Here's the key.

You must shift from performance-based living to identity-based living.

Performance-based living says, "I'll feel righteous when I do enough good things."  
Identity-based living says, "I am righteous, therefore I do good things."

See the difference?

One is trying to become.

The other is living from who you already are.

Think about it like this.

A doctor doesn't perform surgery to become a doctor.  
He performs surgery because he's a doctor.

A teacher doesn't teach to become a teacher.  
She teaches because she's a teacher.

In the same way, you don't do righteous things to become righteous.

You do righteous things because you are righteous.

That's the shift. And when you make that shift, everything changes.

You're not trying to prove yourself anymore.

You're not working for acceptance.

You're working from acceptance.

You're living from righteousness, not for righteousness.