

Title: The New Creation Series – Session 4: Righteous by Nature

Author: Eduard Serediuc

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Introduction

In this teaching session, we will talk about:

- The biblical support for believers in Christ being made righteous in their spirit nature
- Positional vs. practical (behavioral) righteousness
- The legal status and the vital state of humanity (believers in Christ) after salvation.

Believers in Christ Are Righteous By Nature

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NASB)

²¹ He (*God, the Father*) made Him (*Jesus Christ*) who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that ***we might become the righteousness of God in Him.***

- When Adam entered spiritual death, his spirit's nature was altered and entered death. Because of him, the whole human race died in its nature. The Bible tells us in Romans 5:15-19 that Christ, who is the last Adam, not only canceled what the first Adam did, but Christ did much more.

Romans 5:15-19 (NASB)

¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.

¹⁶ The gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification.

¹⁷ For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

¹⁸ So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men.

¹⁹ For as through the one man's disobedience the many ***were made sinners***, even so through the obedience of the One the many ***will be made righteous.***

- Now let's put aside the "much more" part for a moment. Christ should have at least realize what the first Adam did (but towards spiritual life) – meaning an alteration in both the legal status and the vital state – and put believers back in the position in which the first Adam was. However, Christ did much more by giving believers God's righteousness as well, and by not letting them earn it on their own. Romans 5:19 says that through the first Adam, humans were made sinners (not just legally), so through Christ, the born again Christians are made righteous in their spirit's nature. If they were not made righteous in nature as well as legally, Christ would have been weaker than the first Adam and that is not biblical.
- In the same way sin (spiritual death) was not just imputed to the first Adam and to the rest of the human race, now righteousness (spiritual life) is not just imputed to Christians. To Abraham righteousness was just imputed, because he was still a sinner in his nature and Christ had not died yet. However, that is not the case anymore for born again believers in Christ after the cross.

John 3:1-8 (NASB)

¹ Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews;
² this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."
³ Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is **born again** he cannot see the kingdom of God."
⁴ Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?"
⁵ Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
⁶ "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and **that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.**
⁷ "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'
⁸ "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

- In verse 3, the Greek word Jesus used for "born" is *ghennaio* and for "again" is *anōthen*. Gr. Anōthen means "from above, from a higher place, of things which come from heaven." "Born again" translates more accurately in "born from above, born from heaven."
- Nicodemus' question back to Jesus in verse 4 shows us that Jesus used for the word "born" the same Hebrew word that the Jews were accustomed to for natural physical birth. This implies that the spiritual birth Jesus was talking about was a vital one, and not just a metaphorical one.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ Therefore if anyone is in Christ, **he is a new creature**; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

- First, let's take a look at the tenses used in this verse. Anyone in Christ **IS** now (present tense) a new creation and not in the future life. This is a fact, it is the reality, and not a promise.
- Moreover, the old things **PASSED** away (past tense). It doesn't say they will pass away in the future or might pass away if we struggle enough or pray and fast enough.
- Based on what we discussed so far, and based on the fact that God is a pragmatic person, the second creation of the born again Christian is a vital one (in essence, in substance or nature, although invisible) and not just a symbolic one.
- The new creation is not just a changed human being, in the manner in which for example alcoholic people are when they stop drinking. It is neither an improved human being with supernatural abilities attached, like Samson was. The new creation is a completely recreated one, a new species that never existed before, although it has the same soul and lives in the same physical body for a while.

Ephesians 4:20-24 (NASB)

²⁰ But you did not learn Christ in this way,
²¹ if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus,
²² that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit,
²³ and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind,
²⁴ and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God **has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.**

- The new creation is created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

Romans 8:11 (NASB)

¹¹ But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead **will also give life to your mortal bodies** through His Spirit who dwells in you.

- However, as Adam's spiritual death affected his soul and body, the same way the Christian's reborn spirit has the ability to influence the soul and body while on earth, and then ultimately change the body into a glorified body.

John 1:12-13 (NASB)

¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name,

¹³ **who were born**, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but **of God**.

- The new creation is born of God and not of blood or flesh.

Positional vs. Practical Righteousness

- The fact that after being born again, people still do sinful actions bewilders people. On the one hand the bible says that Christians ARE ALREADY righteous, but on the other hand in reality they don't see that righteousness MANIFESTING YET completely. There is an "already and not yet" theory or the so-called positional and practical (or behavioral righteousness).
- The way these 2 types of righteousness are usually understood is the following: Christians are still sinners in their spirit's nature, but have just their legal standing with God changed (positional righteousness). They improve in righteousness (attach practical righteousness) by trying to be moral – reading the word to see what God expects from them morally and then trying to implement it in their lives.
- In my opinion, these 2 terms don't describe accurately what is the actual truth. A better description can be the following one: Innate/Inherent righteousness VS. applied/activated righteousness.
- In reality it is not just the position or legal standing of Christians that has changed to righteousness, but the nature of the major part of their identity (their spirit) has become righteousness. Now only their minds and the bodies have to catch up with the change that took place in their spirit and be renewed. The so-called positional righteousness should cover or describe the change both in the legal standing (status) and the vital state of the spirit. The practical behavioral righteousness should cover or refer to the renewal of the mind and the discipline of the body.
- Having a smartphone with all its potentialities can be compared to the innate/inherent righteousness. Learning how to use the smartphone in the daily lives (learning about apps for different needs, installing them and then using them) can be compared to the applied/activated righteousness in the life of believers. Meditation on the word and renewal of the mind is the process of activating righteousness:
 - 1 Corinthians 10:13 – is a verse in the area of temptations that needs to be meditated upon and personalized
 - 1 Peter 2:24 – is a verse in the area of divine physical healing
 - Psalm 1 – is a passage in the area of prosperity in all areas of life
 - 2 Corinthians 8:9; 9:8 – are 2 passages in the area of prosperity and wealth, debts, and loans.
- Newborn human babies have all the potentialities of the human nature in them at birth (playing instruments, swimming, painting, engineering, driving cars, manufacturing, etc), but they need to grow,

develop their potentialities, and learn all these abilities by practicing them until they become part of them

1 John 5:4 (NASB)

⁴ For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

Ephesians 2:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

2 Peter 1:4 (NASB)

⁴ For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them **you may become partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

(go to subconscious). In the beginning of learning a new thing, the process is difficult (like learning to drive a car), but through practice, it becomes easy second-nature. People born of God are the same.

- Believers are recreated PERFECT and COMPLETE in their spirits in a raw format:

Hebrews 10:14 (NASB)

¹⁴ For by one offering **He has perfected for all time** those who are sanctified.

Hebrews 12:23 (NASB)

²³ to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous **made perfect**,

Colossians 2:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ and in Him **you have been made complete**, and He is the head over all rule and authority;

- Believers are also PERFECTED in faith, love, and holiness in their minds (reason/thinking, will, emotions, speech) and bodies (actions):

James 2:22 (NASB)

²² You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, **faith was perfected**;

1 Peter 5:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself **perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you**.

1 John 4:12 (NASB)

¹² No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and **His love is perfected in us.**

2 Corinthians 7:1 (NASB)

¹ Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, **perfecting holiness** in the fear of God.

- Some of you may wonder how can a spirit be defiled since we just learnt that it is righteous?
- First of all, in the same way defilement of the body doesn't change the nature of the body, the defilement of the spirit doesn't change the nature of the spirit.
- Second, defilement of the body is generally connected in the Scripture with sexual immorality and defilement of the spirit with idolatry and wrong worship. That makes sense when we also think about the kind of worship God likes – in spirit and truth (John 4:23). Furthermore, the context of 2 Corinthians 7:1 verse, meaning chapter 6, is about being yoked with unbelievers and about worship of idols in Corinth. Those things can defile the spirit, but cannot change the righteousness of the spirit's nature or cause the loss of salvation.

Humanity After Salvation – The Legal Status and the Vital State

Romans 8:1 (NASB)

¹ Therefore there is now **no condemnation** for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 2:16 (NASB)

¹⁶ nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that **we may be justified** by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.

Romans 5:19 (NASB)

¹⁹ For as through the one man's disobedience **the many were made sinners**, even so through the obedience of the One **the many will be made righteous.**

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NASB)

²¹ He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that **we might become the righteousness of God** in Him.

- LEGAL STATUS:
 - Justified
- VITAL STATE:
 - Born again believers are righteous because of Christ's life and resurrection and not because of their righteous actions.
 - Believers don't become righteous because they do righteous actions, but they do righteous actions

because they are already righteous.

- Believers are not just considered righteous, but have become righteousness in the nature of their spirit.
- The Holy Spirit works in believers now.
- Believers are BY NATURE children of God (John 1:12-13)
- Believers are no longer powerless in regard to sinful actions, and are no longer subject to spiritual death like: sickness, curse, poverty, weakness, failure, depression, frustration, etc.

Memory Verses

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²¹ He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that **we might become the righteousness of God** in Him.

If you have any questions from the Bible or from this teaching session, or you have a personal problem (in finances, in marriage, with children, with addictions, or with a sickness in your body, etc.) for which you need prayer, please don't hesitate to contact us at contact@eduardserediuc.org or directly from the website from the Contact section -> General Inquiry form. My wife and I will take the time to answer you and pray for you. May God bless you!