



Requirements For The Kingdom

“For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:20).

VCM-SOTM13

6 December 2017

“Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?” (Proverbs 20:6).

“For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:20).

Making heaven is the ultimate goal of God for every Christian. The scriptures declare that “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable” (1 Corinthians 15:19). Jesus also asked in Mark 8:36-37 “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? 37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” It therefore behove every heavenly minded individual to take very seriously Biblical teachings that enlighten on the requirements for making heaven. In order to understand the acceptable righteousness taught by Jesus in this scripture, we first need to understand what constituted “the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees”. This is clearly brought out in another teaching of Jesus as recorded in Matthew 23:1-36, where He clearly describes their unacceptable conduct and practices. Hear it from Jesus’ mouth.

- “Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,
- 2 Saying The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat:
- 3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.
- 4 For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.
- 5 But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,
- 6 And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,
- 7 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.
- 8 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your

- Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.
- 9 And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.
 - 10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.
 - 11 But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.
 - 12 And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.
 - 13 But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.
 - 14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows’ houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.
 - 15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.
 - 16 Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor!
 - 17 Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?
 - 18 And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.
 - 19 Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?
 - 20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar,

swaereth by it, and by all things thereon.

- 21 And whoso shall swear by the temple, swaereth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein.
- 22 And he that shall swear by heaven, swaereth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.
- 23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.
- 24 Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.
- 25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.
- 26 Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.
- 27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.
- 28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.
- 29 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,
- 30 And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.
- 31 Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.
- 32 Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.
- 33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?
- 34 Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:

- 35 That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar”.

If the above constitute unacceptable righteousness, what then constitute acceptable righteousness? The following scriptures help us to answer this question.

- 1) John 4:23-24 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.
- 2) Mark 1:14 ... Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, 15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.
- 3) Romans 10:9-11 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.
- 4) James 1:27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.
- 5) Hebrews 12:14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:
- 6) Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.
- 7) Romans 10:4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.
- 8) Isaiah 58:14 Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.
- 9) Matthew 10:22 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.