

The Righteous Requirement



The Goal Is Love (Part 1)
by Derek Prince

We're going to make a proclamation, as we always do, God helping us. This proclamation is taken from 1 John 4:7–11 and verse 16. You might be interested to research that from the beginning of chapter 4, verse 7, to the end of the chapter, the word love as an adjective, a noun or a verb occurs twenty-eight times in those verses. We're not going to quote them all, but we're going to quote some of them.

> "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. We have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him."

Thank you for helping. All right no you can wipe those and pass them back to me. I'm sorry, but I tend to get emotional. It's not through desire because I was brought up not to be emotional. If ever anybody was trained in the school of the stiff upper lip, it was I. I want to turn, to start with, to Romans 8:3–4.

> "For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God id by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."

As I understand that, what Paul is saying is God has never expected us to achieve righteousness by keeping the Law of Moses. The Law of Moses was perfect, it was God given. The fault is not in the law, the fault is in us. But because we could

not achieve righteousness by keeping the law, God provided an alternative way through the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Jesus Himself was the only Jew, I believe, who ever perfectly kept the Law of Moses. And ultimately, He gave His life as an atonement for the sins of all those who had broken the law and also for the sins of those who had never been under the law. So, we are not required to achieve righteousness by obeying the Law of Moses. Can you say thank God? Because, the Law of Moses was pretty tough. And yet God says it's perfectly possible to do it but none of us did.

So, what is the alternative? This is the issue that I want to raise tonight, what is the alternative? If we're not required to keep the Law of Moses, how can we achieve righteousness with God? The theme of Romans is righteousness. In Job 9:3 Job asked a question out of his perplexity and misery:

> "How can a man be righteous before God?"

And Job's friends, if you can call them friends, ridiculed the idea that anybody could ever be righteous with God. But many hundreds of years later God gave His answer. How can a man be righteous with God? The answer is found in the epistle to the Romans. The righteousness of God which is revealed by faith to faith is described and fully unfolded in the epistle to the Romans. So, God says you're not required to observe the law but Paul says "that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not work according to the flesh but according to the Spirit." We are not required to observe the law but we are required to fulfill the righteous requirement of the law.

That word in Greek is dikaoma. The Greek word for righteousness is dikaosune. So dikaosune, righteousness, is a kind of general concept. Dikaoma is a specific outworking of it. The same word is translated or used in Revelation 19 when it says "the fine linen of the saints is the righteous acts of the saints." So, the word we're talking about is righteousness in action, righteousness worked out, righteousness made practical. And this we are required to observe. Let me read those words again.

> "For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."

That raises a question of vital importance for every Christian, which is what is the righteous requirement of the law? What is it that we are required to fulfill? We're not required to keep the Law of Moses but we are required to keep the righteous requirement of the law. And the theme of my message is simply the answer to the question what is the righteous requirement of the law? I am simpleminded enough to believe that it can be answered in one word of four letters. How many of you know the word? Love, that's right. Love is the righteous requirement of the law. Now we are expected to observe that. We are not required to keep the entire Law of Moses but we are required to observe the righteous requirement of the law.

Let me give you just a number of Scriptures that confirm what I've said. We'll turn, first of all, to Matthew 22:35 and following. This is a conversation between Jesus and a teacher of the Law of Moses.

> "Then one of them, a lawyer [or a teacher], asked Jesus a question, testing Him, and saying, 'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?' Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

Notice He did not hedge, He did not compromise, He was absolutely clear. The two great commandments are love the Lord your God and love your neighbor as yourself.

And then He went on to say:

> "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the prophets."

The Law and the prophets represent what we today call the Old Testament. So, suppose that I wanted to take my jacket off, which I don't, and I wanted to hang it up on a peg somewhere. One simple fact stands out, the peg would have to be there before I could hang the jacket on it. Jesus said all the Law and the prophets hang on these two commandments. The primary commandments that were there before the Law and the prophets are the commandments to love God and love our neighbor as ourselves.

Then in Romans 13:8–10 Paul writes this:

> "Owe no one anything..."

I'm not going to preach on that but it's rather a demanding statement, isn't it? Owe no one anything. Don't be in debt.

> "Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' 'You shall not covet,' and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' Love does not harm to a neighbor, therefore love is the fulfillment of the law."

Love is the righteous requirement of the law.

And then one further scripture, and we could choose many others, but in Galatians 5:14 Paul says:

> "For all the law if fulfilled in one word, even in this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

Notice, the whole law is fulfilled in one word. What is the word? I didn't hear you.

LOVE! Say it again. LOVE! That's better.

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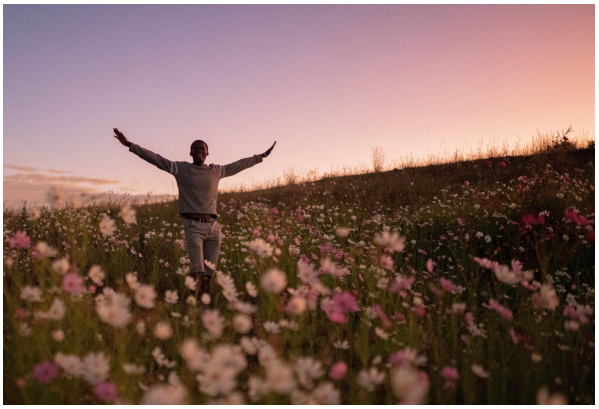
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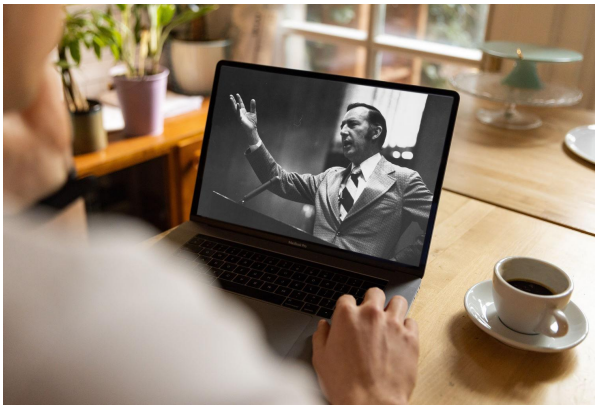
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