

Right vs. Righteous **Isaiah 58:1-12**

What's more important, being right or being righteous? Is there a difference?

Defining terms:

- Being "right" is holding a correct view!
- Being "righteous" is doing the right thing!

None of us are "right" all the time, & none of us act "righteously" all the time, but if you had to choose one or the other what would you choose to be?

Maybe it doesn't have to be an either/or question! Maybe they are meant to go together! Maybe, it's the combination of the two that God truly seeks!

What did you hear from God in Isaiah 58? What's His message to His people?

"They seek me daily and delight to know my ways as if they were a nation that did righteousness..." There was a disconnect between their thinking & their doing! God is not pleased with one removed from the other!

The people issued a complaint against God b/c from their perspective they had done all that He had required of them, yet they were not receiving His blessing!

"Why have we fasted, & you see it not? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you take no knowledge of it?" Aren't we in the "right" here?

You tell us to fast, so we fast! You tell us not to work on the Sabbath so we keep the Sabbath. What more do you want from us God? Ever been there?

God answers, **"Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure & oppress all your workers."** It's all about you, not about what I desire for you!

"Behold, you fast only to quarrel & to fight & to hit with a wicked fist. Fasting like yours this day will not make your voice be heard on high."

You just want to be right, saying "I have the correct view", but you don't care about doing what is right among those whom God has placed in your path!

Other examples of the difference between being "right" & being "righteous"

- Abortion
- Racism
- Human sexuality
- Poverty
- Government/Political leaders

God's response reveals what He values most **"Is not the fast I choose:"**

- **"to loose the bonds of wickedness"**
- **"to undo the straps of the yoke"**
- **"to let the oppressed go free"**
- **"to break every yoke"**
- **"to share your bread with the hungry"**
- **"to bring the homeless poor into your house"**
- **"when you see the naked, to cover him"**
- **"to not hide yourself from your own flesh?"**

"Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, & your healing shall spring up speedily, your righteousness shall go before you, the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard." What goes before you, & who has your back?

Thinking "rightly" is not enough, we must live "righteously" as well!

For if we do, hear again these promises from the mouth of God thru Isaiah, **Vs. 9-12 – "Then you shall call, & the Lord will answer; you shall cry, & He will say, 'Here I am'..."**

If Isaiah was here & spoke into the problems of our day, I believe he would give the same prophetic utterance from God (vs. 1), but would apply it to us.

He would **"cry aloud & not hold anything back."** He would use his **"voice like a trumpet, declaring to God's people their transgression"**; to the Church their sin of not living out rightly what they claim to rightly believe!

The people of God need to be gripped by the practical implications of our **Biblical faith!** And we can't use God as our defense if we only have belief, we need to live out a righteous response as well! *React Student Ministries*

Being "the Church" today is not just about observing the "rituals" of the faith, it's about taking responsibility to live rightly in response to the gospel!

It is God who declares the truth about what is right, we must remember that, but He also declares the truth about how to live in response to it!

"We are saved by faith alone, but not by a faith that is alone!" – Martin Luther

"Faith without deeds is dead... You show me your faith without deeds & I'll show you my faith by what I do." – James 2:17-18 Let this be our testimony!

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