

*“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).*

Volume 13

March 3, 2024

Number 9

## **RIGHTEOUSNESS ACCORDING TO A MAN AFTER GOD’S OWN HEART**

*Nicolas Edwards*

David is revealed to us as a man after God’s own heart, in Acts 13:22. A song of David, recorded in 2 Samuel 22 and Psalm 18, defines righteousness for us. We must be righteous in order to have eternal life (Mt. 25:46). We must work righteousness to be accepted of God (Acts 10:35). Thus, it is essential that we know what righteousness is and work it! David tells us in 2 Samuel 22:21-25 and Psalm 18:20-24. He says, *The Lord rewarded me for my righteousness...for:*

**I HAVE KEPT THE WAYS OF THE LORD.** Keeping the ways of the Lord is required in order to work righteousness! *“...Blessed are they that keep my ways”* (Prov. 8:32). Keeping the ways of the Lord first requires hearing and learning His ways (Dt. 5:1). Once you have heard and learned His ways, through His word, conform your ways to His ways and maintain them! *“O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes”* (Ps. 119:5).

**I HAVE NOT WICKEDLY DEPARTED FROM MY GOD.** Righteousness requires we not

wickedly depart from God! We must not turn from Him to follow evil. *“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God”* (Heb. 3:12). We depart from God when we: Hearken to those who seek to turn us from God (Dt. 13:1-11), are thrust out of the way which the Lord commanded to walk in (Dt. 13:5), go after other gods (1 Ki. 11:9-10; Mt. 6:24), don’t keep His commandments (2 Ki. 18:6).

**ALL HIS JUDGMENTS WERE EVER BEFORE ME.** The king was to *“write a copy of this law...and he shall read therein all the days of his life...”* (Dt. 17:18-19). David is a good example. We need the judgments of the Lord ever before us! *“I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me”* (Ps. 119:30). Can we say that?

**I DID NOT DEPART FROM HIS STATUTES.** When you have the Lord’s word ever before you, it will be harder to depart from it! Those who forsake the law of the Lord are wicked (Ps. 119:53). *“Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end”* (Ps. 119:33). *“So shall I keep thy law continually for ever and ever”* (Ps. 119:44). *“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath*

*not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son”* (2 Jn. 9).

**I WAS ALSO UPRIGHT BEFORE HIM.** *“Upright”* is defined by Strongs as “entire, without blemish, complete, sound, undefiled, unimpaired, innocent, having integrity.” *“What is complete or entirely in accord with truth and fact.”* Many other translations use the word “blameless.” It doesn’t matter who thinks we are upright or blameless, or if I think I am upright. All that matters is that we are *“upright before him.”* That’s God! Zacharias and Elisabeth are good examples of uprightness as *“They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless”* (Lk. 1:6).

**I HAVE KEPT MYSELF FROM MINE INIQUITY.** He kept himself from sin. *“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee”* (Ps. 119:11). *“Keep thee from every wicked thing”* (Dt. 23:10).

This is righteousness, according to a man after God’s own heart. As David, I want to be recompensed, of the Lord, for my righteousness. Not for wickedness (Heb. 10:30-31). It is up to me whether my ways will be righteous or wicked!

## LOCAL CHURCH ASSEMBLIES

Weldon E. Warnock

One important phase of the Christian's life is to attend all the assemblies of the local church where he is a member. Faithful attendance is a good barometer to indicate one's spirituality. Let us look briefly at church attendance.

**THE EARLY CHURCH ASSEMBLED.** Several passages of Scripture show that the first century church assembled. We read that they continued daily in the temple (Acts 2:46), assembled for a prayer meeting (Acts 4:31), called together by the apostles in order to select and appoint special servants in the local church (Acts 6:2), assembled in order to be taught (Acts 11:26), and came together to break bread (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:17-34). The author of Hebrews stated, "*Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together...*" (Heb. 10:25). James wrote about preferential treatment of a rich man over a poor man who comes into the assembly (Jas. 2:2). Clearly, these passages establish the fact of the assembly in the early church and its importance.

**WHY SHOULD THE CHURCH ASSEMBLE?** Many reasons are taught in the Bible as to why the church should assemble.

1. **To worship.** There are certain acts of worship for which we are to come together. On the first day of the week we are to eat the Lord's supper. "*And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them*" (Acts 20:7). Also, we are to "*lay by in store*" upon the first day of the

week (1 Cor. 16:2). Of course, when the church is assembled for these acts, it may, and should, sing, pray, and teach or preach. However, these last three may be done any time the church assembles.

2. **To teach.** For a whole year Paul and Barnabas assembled themselves with the church at Antioch and taught much people (Acts 11:26). The church at Corinth came together for edification (1 Cor. 14:23-26).

3. **To transact business.** The apostles called the church together to make arrangements to care for the needy widows (Acts 6:1-4).

4. **To report the results of evangelism.** "*And when they had come and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles*" (Acts 14:27).

5. **To discuss matters of differences among the brethren.** The church at Jerusalem and those who came down from Antioch came together to consider the matter of circumcision, which the Judaizers were imposing on the Gentile churches (Acts 15).

6. **To discipline the unruly.** Paul wrote to the church at Corinth that when they are gathered together to deliver the fornicator among them to Satan for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit may be saved (1 Cor. 5:4-5).

**CHRISTIAN'S DUTY.** Now then, what is the Christian's duty toward the assemblies of the church? Obviously, the Christian should be present, if

possible, at all of these meetings. That would be the responsible thing to do. If one may miss without cause, then all may. Hence, there would be no assemblies. Let us look at some reasons why a Christian should be at every service.

1. **He is commanded to assemble.** "*Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together*" (Heb. 10:25). Notice, the verse does not say "assembly" but "assembling." Verse 24 indicates that in these assemblies we provoke or stimulate one another unto love and good works.

2. **In order to do good.** "*Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin*" (Jas. 4:17). Attending all the services of the church is doing good. It does good to the one attending and to the welfare of the whole church. Poor attendance on Sunday night and Wednesday night destroy the spiritual vitality of the church. It is also a bad influence on the community that we are trying to convert. One who sits at home when the church meets does not have the good of the church at heart. Those who think that Sunday morning is sufficient want to go to heaven at a minimal effort. This kind of attitude does not reflect devotion to God and commitment to Jesus Christ.

3. **In order for elders to feed the flock.** Elders are shepherds and they have the duty to feed the sheep (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2). It seems some like the feed that is offered on the "boob-tube" rather than the sincere milk of the word (1 Pet. 2:2). To stay away from the assemblies does not show much of a cooperative spirit toward the elders. Compare

Hebrews 13:17.

Brethren, there is more to Christianity than just attending services. But this is an important part of it. Actually, those who refuse to attend all the services don't take very seriously the other duties of being a Christian. Show me a person who neglects the assemblies of the church and I will show you a person who is doing little, if anything else for the Lord.

*Truth Magazine*  
Vol. XLIV, No. 23  
Dec. 7, 2000, pp. 20-21

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## THE PRECIOUS DEATH

*John Edwards*

It is often difficult for us to think of death as precious. Yet, the Bible says, "*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints*" (Ps. 116:15).

**PRECIOUS.** The word "*precious*" is found 76 times throughout the pages of God's inspired revelation, and has to do with that which is costly and highly valued. The Bible

mentions many things as being precious: the word of the Lord (1 Sam. 3:1), God's thoughts (Ps. 139:17), unity of brethren (Ps. 133:1-2), the trying of one's faith (1 Pet. 1:7), the blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:19), Christ (1 Pet. 2:4-7), faith (2 Pet. 1:1), promises (2 Pet. 1:4), and, yes, even death (Ps. 116:15).

**IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD.** The Lord often looks at things differently than we do, "*for the Lord seeth not as man seeth*" (1 Sam. 16:7). By His messenger, Isaiah, the Lord said, "*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord*" (Is. 55:8). We just need to realize the Lord knows best and say, "*The will of the Lord be done*" (Acts 21:14).

**IS THE DEATH.** Death is as "*common*" as life itself (Num. 16:29). The Preacher said, "*For the living know that they shall die*" (Eccl. 9:5). "*...it is appointed unto men once to die...*" (Heb. 9:27).

**OF HIS SAINTS.** Not all death is said to be precious — only "*the death of his saints.*" One must be in Christ and a

member of the Lord's church to be a saint (1 Cor. 1:2). We urge you to be "*baptized into Christ*" (Gal. 3:27) and "*walk ye in him*" (Col. 2:6), so your death will be precious!

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**2024**

## GOSPEL MEETINGS

Mark your calendar as the elders have planned two gospel meetings for 2024:

1. **April 7-12** with Nicolas Edwards

2. **October 28-November 3** with Ron Halbrook

We hope you will arrange your schedule so as to be present for all assemblies of the church.

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**"Saul...assayed to join himself to the disciples..."** (Acts 9:26). To "*join himself to*" is "to join or fasten firmly together" (Strong's). Does this describe you as an unmovable member in the local church or are you out floating around?

**The Terre Haute** **SPEAKER** is published weekly by the church of Christ at Terre Haute, Indiana.

### **Assembling At:**

4017 E Margaret DR  
Terre Haute, IN 47803  
[Exit 11 (I-70) W on HWY 46,  
West on Margaret DR 1 mile]

### **Assembling Times:**

Sunday @ 10:00 a.m. & 3:00 p.m.  
Wednesday @ 7:00 p.m.

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