

# GODHEAD COURSE

## Lesson 25 How it impacts RBF

*“But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.” 1 Corinthians 6:17*

What is RBF? In order for us to know how the Godhead issue affects the RBF message, we need to first understand what RBF is. Put simply, RBF refers to a righteousness received by faith. Notice the following text:

*“Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference ...” Romans 3:20-22*

Please do not miss the point. Paul is not talking about man’s righteousness. He is talking about the very righteousness of God Himself. He calls it *“the righteousness of God.”* Notice what he says in Chapter 10:

*“For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” Romans 10:3*

The righteousness being offered to us is not of human origin; it is God’s own righteousness. It is what Martin Luther called a *“justitia alienum,”* an alien righteousness; a righteousness that belongs properly to somebody else. He went on to say it’s a righteousness that is *“extra nos,”* outside of us. Namely, the righteousness of Christ.

Paul is clear in his message. He is pointing his reader to a special kind of righteousness; a righteousness that could not be attained through obedience to the law. God has manifested His righteousness apart from the whole principle of law, the whole idea of legal obedience as a way of obtaining righteousness, and from the legalistic system the Jews presented as the basis of righteousness.

The righteousness of God is only available *“by faith of Jesus Christ”* to all them that *“believe”*. The only condition provided is *“believe”*. That is where the term RBF comes from. It stands for the good news that we can receive the righteousness of God by faith.

Now, of course, we are saved by faith alone, but faith that saves is never alone; it is always accompanied with a change. We are not saved by faith and works: we are saved by faith that works. The RBF message does not do away with the works of faith; but it does do away with the works of the law. There is a big difference between the works of the law and the works of faith. The first is the source of man’s righteousness, the latter is the fruit of God’s righteousness.

RBF is the term used in reference to the righteousness one receives by simply believing in Jesus and accepting Him as his Lord and Saviour.

Notice what Paul wrote to the Philippians:

*“And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith ...” Philippians 3:9*

It is a righteousness that comes from God by faith, not as a result of me keeping the law, but of believing on Jesus. This is the biblical teaching of RBF. Very simple, yet very true and liberating.

“How is it possible to receive the Righteousness of God by simply believing on His Son?”

Until one has learned the truth about God and his Son, especially the identity of the Holy Spirit, RBF is simply a theory. Through understanding the Bible teaching of the Holy Spirit one is able to understand the deep implications of Righteousness by Faith which enables him to praise God from the depths of his heart for His wonderful plan of salvation.

What is righteousness? If the righteousness we receive by faith is not based on obedience to law, then what is it? It obviously cannot refer to my actions or works. Yes, *righteous actions will be the fruit of an internal righteousness*; however, we are looking for the root or source of it.

Different schools of understanding relating to God’s righteousness:

1. **Actions:** Some interpret God’s righteousness as righteous actions. The focus is on actions; obedience to the law. The focus is on the do’s and don’ts. You determine your stand with God based on your obedience.
2. **A change of a record in heaven:** Some view God’s righteousness as simply a change in God’s books in heaven. A change in God’s mind about the sinner. Before accepting Jesus, God saw him as a sinner, then God sees him as being righteous. The emphasis is on a changed record in heaven, and not on a changed life.
3. **A Person:** There is an element of truth to both ideas (# 1 and 2), but they both miss the main point. This righteousness is referring to a Person. It is not a righteous action, neither is it a change of record. The righteousness God has offered us by faith is found in a Person because it is His nature. Yes, it will result in righteous actions but is not found in righteous actions.

Can one be holy without God? No, holiness is an attribute of God alone, hence without God you cannot have holiness. The same goes for righteousness. Righteousness is an attribute of God (Matthew 19:16, 17; 1 John 1:5; Psalms 119:137, 142). Without God we cannot be righteous. Holiness and righteousness are attributes only found in God, because it is His own nature. As far as the human race is concerned, the only way we can become partakers of God’s nature is through Christ (John 14:6). Hence, righteousness is found in a Person, not in actions.

Continuing with “what is Righteousness”:

*“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell*

*safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.***” Jeremiah 23:5, 6

*“But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption ...”* 1 Corinthians 1:30

These verses testify that the Lord Himself is our Righteousness. Jesus Himself “is made” unto us righteousness. His name is the Righteous Branch. God said “... *their righteousness is of me*” (Isaiah 54:17).

Notice also what Paul said:

*“What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone ...”*  
Romans 9:30-32

Why did the Gentiles attain to this righteousness and the Jews did not? What is Paul’s point? The Gentiles did not trust in their own works, they trusted in God and accepted Jesus as their Saviour. The Jews rejected Jesus and trusted in their own efforts. Righteousness is found in Jesus. If you have Jesus, you have the righteousness of God, if you do not have Him, you do not have this righteousness.

*“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”* 2 Corinthians 5:21 (see also Romans 8:1-4)

We are made the righteousness of God in Christ. In Christ is found this righteousness. He has been made righteousness unto us. In other words, the righteousness we are to receive by faith, or the righteousness we are saved by, is found in the life of Jesus Christ Himself. Notice what the Bible says:

*“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”* Romans 5:10

We are saved and made right with God, or made righteous, by receiving the life of Christ. Salvation and righteousness are found in Jesus Christ (2 Tim 2:10). The reason this is so, is because Jesus accomplished the work of salvation in Himself, meaning, He authored:

- A life that is free from sin, the seed of death. (John 14:30)
- A life that is eternal (John 1:4, 1 John 1:2)
- A life that is partaker of the divine nature (John 1:1 + 1:14, 14:10,11)
- A life that is fully united with God (John 10:30; 6:57; Col 1:19)
- A life in which is found everlasting righteousness (Daniel 9:24, Rom 3:21, 22, 1 Cor 1:30)
- A life in which sin has been condemned (Rom 8:3)
- A life in which the author of sin & death has been defeated. (Heb 2:14)
- A life in which is found eternal salvation (Heb 5:9)

The life of Jesus is the crux of RBF. When a sinner repents and accepts Jesus as his Saviour, God imparts to him the Spirit/life of His Son (Galatians 4:6; Acts 3:26).

That is why the Bible says:

*“Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.” 2 Corinthians 4:10, 11*

The basis of the RBF message is found in the indwelling of Christ (Col 1:27; 1 John 4:4; Gal 2:20; Eph 3:17; 2 Cor 13:5; Rom 8:10). The only reason we become righteous is because we partake of the divine—or righteous—nature of God, by receiving the life of Jesus Christ (2 Cor 4:10,11).

Looking back at the first verse in this chapter:

*“But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.” 1 Corinthians 6:17*

In other words, when a sinner repents, he receives the life of Christ. This brings God’s nature, righteousness, and sanctification. The life of Christ is the centre of the RBF message. It is an exchange of life, not a modification of life.

Therefore, righteousness is found in a Person, Jesus Christ; it is not merely doing right but being right. And being right relates to our spirit or soul. It is an internal thing. It refers to who we are on the inside. When a person truly receives God’s righteousness by faith, their life will change. Change always accompanies conversion because it is no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me. (Galatians 2:20)

What this means, is that the RBF message is based on each one of us receiving the righteous life of Christ: The Divine Person, which is Christ Himself.

All this is linked with a correct understanding of the identity of the Holy Spirit. Understanding the true identity of the Holy Spirit, that it is the life of Christ, helps us to know how we become one Spirit with Him. We become one Spirit with Him when we receive His very life.

The gospel, is about restoring *life* to man. The Bible tells us this *life* is found in His Son, and we receive it by receiving His Spirit. John tells us:

*“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.” 1 John 5:11-13*

The reason John could say the above is because life, righteousness, and salvation are found in Jesus Christ. He is our life (Col 3:4)

Through the Trinity doctrine, a new spirit, another spirit, has been introduced (2 Cor 11:4). Notice what the trinity teaches:

“The Father is not the Son, and the Holy Spirit is not the Father or the Son.”  
(Understanding the Trinity by Jeffrey E. Brower and Michael C. Rea, University of Notre Dame p.2)  
(<https://www3.nd.edu/~mrea/papers/Understanding%20the%20Trinity.pdf>)

“The Father is not the Son; Son is not the Spirit; Spirit is not the Father, etc”  
(Bible Studies for Youth—Seventh-day Adventist Church.  
[http://aucyouth.adventist.org.au/uploaded\\_assets/361517](http://aucyouth.adventist.org.au/uploaded_assets/361517))

This means that “God the holy spirit” is not Jesus; **meaning, the spirit we receive is not the spirit or life of Jesus.**

According to this teaching, it is ‘God the Holy Spirit’ who dwells in us, the “*temple of God*” (1 Corinthians 3:16), while Jesus is in heaven with the Father. Through this teaching, a third person/being (God the Holy Spirit) has been regarded as equal with God, worthy of worship, reverence and adoration as God. Yet, every Bible student knows the term “God the Holy Spirit” is never mentioned in Scripture.

In light of this, it is very significant what the Bible says:

*“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4*

Christ has been taken from the believer. Instead of receiving His life/spirit, we receive another person/being called “*God the Holy Spirit.*”

This is a direct attack on the foundation of the RBF message. We receive righteousness by receiving Jesus, not another person called “*God the Holy Spirit*”, who never experienced humanity, and was never tempted or overcame temptation.

RBF is built on the truth that we become righteous when by faith we believe and hence receive the righteous life of Jesus (John 1:12,13).

The trinity doctrine destroys this beautiful truth by replacing the indwelling Christ with the indwelling of another being called “*God the Holy Spirit*” who is not Jesus. It turns the beautiful teaching of RBF into a meaningless theology.

After understanding the true identity of the Holy Spirit, RBF becomes a meaningful reality.

It highlights what Christ has done and is doing for us. Paul’s words “*ye are complete in him*” will become the highlight of your experience