

The School of Biblical Law
Introduction to Law and Grace
Lesson Twenty-Five: “Defining Sin and Righteousness”

The Bible provides the believer with a definition of sin as well as a definition of righteousness. These two topics are major themes within the scripture, and the meaning of each term may be found within the pages of God’s Word.

1. Sin is most properly interpreted to miss the mark.
 - The Hebrew verb *chata* (Strong’s #2398) means to miss.
 - The Greek equivalent verb *hamartano* (Strong’s # 264) also means to miss
 - The mark, which is missed, is defined within God’s Law.
 - I John 3:4: “Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law; for sin is the transgression of the Law

Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth in its own nature bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God and the curse of the law, and so made subject unto death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal.” (*The Westminster Confession of Faith*, Chp. VI, #6)

It is “disconformity to the Law” (*The Grace of Law*, Ernest F. Kevan, 79)

Romans 3:20(b), “By the law is the knowledge of sin.”

2. The Law also gives us our definition of righteousness.
 - The Hebrew verb *sadaq* (Strong’s #6663) means to be right.
 - The Greek equivalent in noun form *dikaioo* (Strong’s #1343) also means to be right or just and is usually translated as righteousness.
 - A composite definition of righteousness would be: rightness, justice, fairness, or one who pays his rightful dues to God and man.
 - If you will be right with God, you keep the first five commandments; and if you will be right with your neighbor, you obey the last five commandments.
3. Righteousness is produced through imputation and justification.

Imputation: “Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned (Strong’s #3049 – *logizomai*) of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth (Strong’s #1344 *dikaioo*) the ungodly, his faith is counted (Strong’s #3049 – *logizomai*) for righteousness (Strong’s #1343 – *dikaioo*). Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth (Strong’s #3049 – *logizomai*) righteousness (Strong’s #1343 – *dikaioo*) without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute (Strong’s #3049 – *logizomai*) sin” (Rom.4:4-8).

Justification: Knowing that a man is not justified (Strong’s #1344 *dikaioo*) by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified (Strong’s #1344 *dikaioo*) by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified (Strong’s #1344 *dikaioo*) (Gal. 2:16).

All covenant believers are made righteous by faith in Christ Jesus. I John 3:7 says, “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.” A just person – one whose sins are imputed to Christ and who has been declared in right standing with the Father by faith in the work of the Son – does just dealings towards both God and his fellowman. A righteous man does not love sin (lawlessness) nor does he practice sin (lawlessness).