

CNLO Season 2009

12.2 The Lord is My Righteousness pt 2

Transcription

“You have no life in your own righteousness and the bottom line is that if you want to deal with eternity and deal with life, deal with me”

(loudly). We have to quit doing it our own way. Look at the next verses Romans: 3:10: “ There is none righteous, no not one, all have sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God.” That means nobody here is going to make it on their own. Now this is what Israel said at the time God said to be righteous. Let’s read it together. They will say it’s hopeless according to our own plans and each of us will act according to the stubbornness of our own heart. In other words they’ve come to the place where they’ve said “forget it”. We can’t be righteous. I’m just going to go ahead and party until I die. Because I know that’s what I want to do. Some of you may say here today, “Man I’ve got old tape recordings that keep coming back into my life. I feel like there’s a futility in leading a righteous life. Let me just tell you, let me just encourage you. If you’ve been born again and the Spirit of God resides in you, there is not a futility you can overcome the old tape recordings in your mind. The old habits, you can have victory over them. Israel gave up and that’s why God judged them. It’s because they stopped trying to walk with God where he wanted them to walk. This is one of the reasons why – let’s read Judges 2:10 together: “There arose a generation after them who did not know the Lord, know the work which he had done for Israel — then the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, who had brought them out of the Land of Egypt”. What he is saying —

I don’t know if you know, but the second generation after the Pilgrims started living in sinful ways, the Pilgrims never did. In other words, once things were set up and going well, we have a tendency to forget and Israel has seen a miracle- for heaven’s sake — like Lake Michigan being opened up and they’re walking across it, on dry land, I’d say looking up at a mile high —you know —jelled water next to you and watching the fish swim around while you’re walking across dry land, should make an impact — and Mom and Dad even telling the story one

generation later — everybody had forgotten and they were living the way they shouldn't live.

So, folks, we're looking at literally how we can have hearts that forget quickly. We say "yeah, yeah — that's understandable a generation later", but I want to tell you, let's take a look at Jeremiah:3-8, this will come closer to home. Let's read it together. "For all the adulteries of faithless Israel, God sent her away and gave her a writ of divorce, yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but she went and was a harlot also". I'll tell you what this is about. It takes a minute, just pay attention. There is Judah and there is Israel, because the ten tribes have separated from Judah, and Judah, of course, is made up of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin — the tribes of Judah and Benjamin —

and then the ten tribes that make up Israel. Now, Israel gets taken off by the Assyrians because they are living wickedly, because they are following Baal — they are sacrificing their babies to have good crops. God is furious about this, he sends Israel off into captivity under Assyria. Now, Judah watching their brothers and sisters in the other nation, being taken off, should have learned a lesson. They should have said "Whoops, I guess God is not too happy with what we're doing — our brothers and sisters are all being taken off into captivity, therefore, we should repent. That would be the logical thing. Right? But you know what happened? Well, they're getting taken off, that'll distract God and the Assyrians, so let's keep doing what we're doing!" Have you ever had a moment in time where you thought, "I wonder if God is talking to me?" Something a near miss in your life — a relationship, something somebody says to you and you go "Whoa, I think God is trying to say something to me", and then two seconds later "Nah" and you'll walk on and do your sin. Come on, anybody know what I'm talking about? Where you know that you're sinning, a near miss, and you almost get destroyed by it, but if you don't; you just keep going instead of stopping and saying "Thank you, God — it didn't happen. Thank you for the warning" and turning from your path. You see, because you're living a con game with God, you're doing this in your relationship, instead of doing this — straight on. In counseling, communication and honesty in relationships is critical for the survival of any relationship and Israel was not being honest. Today, challenge your life with your husband, with your wife, with your friends, your children. Are you being honest with God,

being honest with one another or not? What it comes down to, also, is that the reason I think that we many times don't really hear God is because he's not that much in it. Like I said, you're over-crowding, over-populating your life with too much junk if you do not have time for the Lord. You say "I don't have time for bible study". I don't mean to put a guilt trip on your if you're not in a bible study, but let me encourage you — if you don't have time for bible studies, if you don't have time for devotions, if you don't have time to get God's word — your life is over-crowded. It is over-populated with too much stuff. There are too many weeds in your garden. I mean, if your garden came to the place where there wasn't a single living plant, except for weeds, holy moly — that's not a good garden. I remember telling you guys, last year, about what I thought was a plant — it was right next to the garden where Maria and her mom, you know, do some plants and make them look really nice — I avoid touching plants, because I kill them — I mean, I always have — I don't know what — I can water them and follow the rules and they just die — plastic plants — we've had — it's been known plastic plants have died that I have worked on — (laughter) — I mean, it's just bizarre, but anyway, there was this one plant that just seemed to thrive — it had a real pretty flower, and I would actually water it and then I got a little food for it one day when I was in Walgreen's or Wal-Mart and I sprinkled a little food on that thing and I noticed it was flourishing and I thought "Yes, finally I have the gift of growing things" and about 10 days later — things have been hacked down to zero — it's like nothing — like a nub, and I'm heartbroken — I'm dying — and I'm looking "It's gone" and right then Maria asked "What happened?" and I said "To my plant — this thing was actually growing. You know I'm the one that has been taking care of this plant, the one that has been feeding it". She goes "Peter, that was a weed." (laughter) I mean, I thought it was a homely looking plant, but it was a real living plant. "It was a weed, Peter, and we pulled it up with all the other weeds — we weeded yesterday" and I was like "Oh, no, not my plant" — it was like a horrifyingly, heartbreaking moment, but you know — that figures — now, I know why it grew, but isn't it funny how quickly and easily we can feed our weeds, but we don't feed the plant that God has put in our vineyard ---and I want to encourage you, today, if you find you do not have time — I will repeat this for our

bible study — for opening the scriptures in the morning, or the evening with your children before you go to bed — for not praying with your children — praying with your spouse — having time with God during the week, your schedule is over-crowded, your garden is packed with weeds.

Now, I'm going to give you a challenge. I meant to put this as an underline, but there is a little space there, you see to the right, there, of all those bible verses, a little space. I am going to give you a challenge, now, and just ask you "do you know your life is over-crowded, because right now you may be saying "Yeah, I don't spend the time with the Lord that I should, I'm too busy. I'm putting second class stuff in the first class place of God. I'm getting choked out with the cares of this world", which we talked about last week. If you would go ahead and just scribble in there — now, this is for you to take home, for yourself, but think of one weed, this week, you know that is stealing time that you should be spending with God. One weed, maybe you watch too much TV.. .maybe you sit and watch too much TV, but think of one weed, this week, you know that is stealing time that you should be spending with God. One weed, maybe you watch too much TV.. .maybe you sit and watch too much TV, maybe you have to read 30 magazines a week, maybe you have to read old newspapers — I don't know what it is, but would you, right now, just in that blank, that space that's right here, right in here, just write in one weed, maybe you'll say one hour of TV, that I'm going to pull this weed to make space for God, because if you're not finding the space for God during the week, an hour at least, to study his word, you're over-weeded and find what it is and just make a dedication to yourself and go home and commit yourself to not dedicating yourself to that weed. "I'm not going to feed the weed"! In fact, let's make commitment #2 out-loud, as a congregation, "I will not let the Lord be crowded out of my life". Let's say it again. "I will not let the Lord be crowded out of my life". That's what Satan wants to do is crowd God out of your life. He doesn't have to crowd it out with Satanism, he doesn't have to crowd it out with a cult, and stuff, he just has to crowd God out, because he knows the lack of God means the lack of your relationship. The lack of relationship is a lack of living righteously.

#3 — In righteousness, it always follows a payment for debt. Righteousness follows the payment for debt. What that means is the debt has to be paid, right here, righteousness follows the payment of debt. Now, I have talked about this when we did the study on the Tabernacle, but it's very critical that you think Jewish people, today, from the early centuries to really understand this properly. It comes down to the word "impute". "Imputation" is a word in Hebrew, which talks about transferring accounts. How you transfer from one account to the other? Now, in the Garden of Eden, here is Satan up in the tree and he is enticing them and the moment they disobey, they have a perfectly righteous nature that time, sinless. Do you realize that man at one time was sinless? He was no where near God, he was not God, but he was sinless. In other words, if you look at the slate of debts, spiritually, he had no spiritual debts. Satan gets involved and makes them disobey God and, suddenly, on the debt side of the ledger — do you know what a ledger is? Have you ever done a P & L — There is this kind of ledger work — you're going to find that there is the credit side and there is the debit or the debt side. Are you all with me? So, if you imagine this huge debt sheet and over here this credit and over here this debt, well, it was just this beautiful slate, which existed for Adam and Eve, and the day that Satan got involved with them — BAM, this side, the debit side was filled and that debit side was, basically, the number of years separated from God. It was the years in eternal damnation. It was an unlimited damnation. Suddenly, the debt side was filled. Now, as they have continued to generate from generation to generation, you and I have picked up that debt. Did you know that? We inherit the debt. There are some societies that when the grandfather has a debt, when he dies the father gets the debt, and when he dies the children get the debt. That's what happens here. You and I keep getting Adam's debt. So, we're in a debit situation. Now, what "imputation" is, is this. — The Old Testament — I wish we could actually bring the Rule of Ram in here and do this, but I don't think it would work in this house, but they would actually take a ram, after they had done the sacrifice of the lamb, remember, which is symbolic of Christ and the blood was sprinkled on the Holy of Holys, on the Ark of the Covenant, they would then go out and lay their hand on this ram, outside the city gates, and they would "impute" — transfer the count of Israel to

the ram, also, and then let it go outside into the wilderness and be lost and die. It couldn't ever come back. That goat could never come back into Jerusalem. It could never come back to town. It was let go and released after having the hands laid on it, because they were "imputing" their sin and that sin was to go away and never come back. Now, that's the work of God, in fact, in the New Testament, do you remember the phrase "lay hands on no man, quickly"? In the bible it teaches how to build a church and if we really — we'd find that most American churches aren't really biblically built in certain areas, and that's why we don't have committees, because committee's usually have ten people telling one person what to do until he wears out and burns out. In biblical ministry, it is ten people doing the work of ministry, but here, it says "lay hands on no man, quickly", and the reason is that the bible is teaching just because a guy walks in and says " I'm very — I have a lot of personality, a lot of talents or whatever, you don't lay hands on that persons authority until you watch their lives. A person can come in and say "I'm a billionaire, man, put me on your board and I'll pay all your bills and you will have no more debts". Tempting as that is, what you are supposed to say is "No, we want to watch your life and see if you're righteous Before God — if you live and love the Lord — and then you become part of the leadership and ministry". By "imputing" — by laying hands, just like with laying hands with the goat — of sin, when you lay hands on a man quickly, it means don't impute authority, don't delegate authority to him if he is not a proven element.

"Imputing" means to transfer to an account — transfer power — transfer sin, whatever it is. So, whenever you see "Impute" in the bible, it is a term that deals with bookkeeping. As Jesus, the Righteous One, hung on the cross — that debit side of this sheet — that huge sheet, the debt side that Adam and Eve had procured of damnation, as Jesus hung on the cross, he took all those debts and their punishment upon himself and he, as the lamb of God, died. He was the scapegoat for us, get it? That's what scapegoat is.. .that's where it comes from, the phrase. He became our scapegoat. So, now, once again, our debit — now we're like Adam and Eve. Now, we can walk and talk with God and have eternity before us, but it's what's incredible, we'll see next week. That was a miraculous thing — that he took ALL that debt and took the punishment upon himself of all the people who had confessed, but right here, an amazing thing — Oh, I have one more thing for you. He comes over to our credit column and he places

into it — righteousness. He became our righteousness. Now, the power of this will be seen fully, next week. It will blow your mind, what it means to have not only your sins forgiven, but he became and gave us his righteousness — this characteristic, which is simply that God has — that he has “imputed” and transferred to our account — is a mind-blower. So, we actually, years ago, passed the buck — so to speak — passed it to God, but never forget the “laying on of hands”, it’s like a wire transfer of accounts. O.K.? Let me just tell you this way. The reason this is so important is because if you have such a gracious God, why do you keep living life like you are faking him out and he doesn’t know what you’re doing? I’m trying to encourage you all to have a relationship with God and even when you sin, have a relationship with God. Some people say that “because of my sin, I’m afraid — I’m embarrassed to talk to God. Don’t be!!! He knows.. .he knows where the sin is. Learn to have a relationship with him, because the more you deal with him and speak truly to him about your sins, the easier it is to handle. This reminds me of two fellows walking down the street. One has a sheepdog and the other has a little Chihuahua. They are just talking and walking down the street with these dogs on leashes and this one guy says “Oh, look at that restaurant, it is really classy. Let’s go eat there”. It could be the restaurant I ate at, where I stuck the gum (laughter), but he says “Look there — let’s eat there”. The other guy says “we can’t eat there, we have these two dogs”. “Oh, no problem, just follow me. Do you have any sun glasses?” “Yeah” said the other man. “Put them on,” said the first man as he pushes his dog in front of him. He comes to the front door and the guy at the door of the restaurant stops him. The guy told him “You can’t come in here, you’ve got dogs”. “What do you mean, I can’t come in here — this is my seeing eye dog. I need this dog to see where I’m going. What kind of person are you?” Oh, oh, that’s your seeing eye dog? O.K., you can go on in”. The guys go on in. The guy with the sheep dog goes on in and then here comes the guy with the little dog and the door-man says just a minute, you got a dog”. The second guy says “Yeah, I know — it’s my seeing eye dog”. The door-man says “Mister, you can’t come in here with that chihuahua”, and the second guy says “Chihuahua, chihuahua, did they give me a chihuahua?” (laughter) If you don’t get it, you’ll get it eventually. (laughter) The point is, he is trying to keep the ruse going like “Oh, I didn’t know it was a chihuahua. They must have ripped me off”. The

bottom line comes down to this — we live in this world of “You mean I did that? — why do we have to keep getting caught. Why don’t we just do it the right way, before it happens? Righteousness is being straight with God — being honest with God, and it follows the debt of his pain on the cross. Now, he’s saying “O.K., now you’ve got righteousness live it”. Let’s read Jeremiah 31:33 together. “Rethink how you do things. Work at a different angle” — let’s continue “I will put my law within them and on their heart I will write it — for I will forgive their iniquities and their sins and I will remember no more”. Let me tell you, this comes down to — God say’s “I am not going to be at a distance, in fact, I’m going to make sure that you don’t miss my point I’m going to actually scribble and write my law upon your hearts”. What’s the two elements of the law? Let God into your heart —love your neighbors as yourself. He says I am going to teach you how to be righteous by putting it where you can’t miss it. I’m going to inscribe it on your heart. In other words, this is going to be personal. It will no longer be at a distance, look at the law. Don’t look at the Ten Commandments, don’t look at the Shikinah Glory at a distance, now it will be inscribed upon your hearts. This is a very personal God, he is trying to share how personal he is and how his relationship should be personal with us —Hebrew 1, let’s read this together. “Yearly sacrifices were not able to make people perfect”. In other words, it came to the point where God said he would have to deal with more than just the legalistic sacrifices. We have got to have human beings dealing honestly with issues and if you’ll jump down to 2nd Corinthians 4:8 & 9, I’ll show you what can happen and this is where we lead into next week. It will be on the power of understanding “righteous”, not self-righteous, not legalistic, but righteous living. It’s going to come in these two verses. Let’s read those verses together. “We are pressed on every side by troubles, but not crushed and broken. We are perplexed, but we don’t give up and quit. We get knocked down, but we get up again and keep going”. Now, does that sound like victorious living? Amen? (muttering of congregation) Now, does it say that we’ll never have a problem? No, it said victorious living is when you get knocked down, you get back up. You get knocked down, you get back up. The old joke about the coach, you know, “go and find me the right guy for my team” and they go out and they look for the guy and the guy gets knocked down and he stays down, and the next guy gets knocked down and they finally

get to the place that the guy gets knocked down fifteen times and he stays down every time and the Assistant says to the Coach “that’s the guy you want us to hire”, and the Coach say’s “No, I want you to find the guy that keeps knocking them down”. (laughter) We’re at a place where we have to understand - in your life of victory, if you live a righteous life, no matter how many times you get knocked down, you will always be able to get back up. There is a power and a procedure to it. The first thing I want to share with you is to just “focus”. If you will just scribble that in that little blank there — it will come down to focus, no where you focus, but how you focus. Josiah, my 13 year old son, the reason that I think he excels in things — talk about wrestling — you know, he’s only been wrestling about 12 months now. This is against kids that have been wrestling six and seven years, and I notice the excellence with which he performs on a mat. He goes out there and dominates the mat. Do you know why? When he was a little six-year-old and they were playing soccer — have you ever seen five and six year olds play soccer? — Some of them would run around and pick flowers or whatever and Josiah would stand there and study soccer on television, on tape, and he would go and stand on the field and he would go and get that ball and kick it in. He would go back and stand in position, get the ball, and kick it in. He is the most focused person in the world. Totally dedicated to focusing. When he sees an object that must be done, he accomplishes it. He doesn’t dwell on everything else. He doesn’t dwell on girls on the field — the girls and boys playing on the same teams — flowers, teasing each other — nothing. Joe is right there. But, it was focus. I want to tell you now, if you focus upon the weeds and the feeding the weeds in your garden, if you focus on the pleasures in this life, I’m going to tell you — do you know what you’re going to grow? The pleasures of this life.. .but, you’ll also grow destruction. But, if you focus upon the righteousness of God, upon his blessings to you, and the things that he has done for you, if you learn where to focus your attention and your energies, I will tell you —you are in Christ Jesus, undefeatable. We are going to learn a system of doing this throughout this next week, as well. I’ll challenge you this way. You wake up in the morning. What do you do with the first 30 minutes of your day? Don’t say it out loud. (laughter) Wake up in the morning, swing your feet out of bed, is the very first thought in your mind “how can I live righteously, before God? How can I conquer, literally, how can I expand the Kingdom of God?” Is that what you say the first 30 minutes, or is

it “what do I have to do today to make enough money to make the next bill paid, or what can I do today to do this, this, or this”. What are the first 30 minutes dedicated to? In the cool of the day, Adam and Eve walked in the Garden. That’s when Satan tempted — in the cool of the evening is when God had been walking with Adam and Eve. In the cool of the day, what do you do with that part of the day? Are you dedicated to the next step as an individual, financially, successfully, or is your thought “how can I live closer to God, more righteously with God, so that I really learn to understand what God means for my life?” Now, if you’re really honest, you’ll find that the vast majority of most human beings’ mornings are dedicated to how can I get out ahead of the crowd and run the footrace today and either just survive, or succeed financially?” In other words, now are you saying to have success financially is a weed? No, but if it becomes the focus of your garden — it’s a weed. In other words, the difference between a weed and a plant is for whose glory is it? And why do you do it? Are you all with me? That’s the difference between it. For whose glory is it? And if it’s for the glory of God, then God bless it and you can enjoy it, but if it becomes the purpose of your life, instead of glorifying God, then it becomes a weed and it will choke out your spiritual life, so, today, I challenge you. Take about the first 30 minutes of your day — you know it’s what you focus on. I remember, as a kid, I’ve told this before — if you’re on a bicycle and there’s a big rock in the road and you don’t want to hit it, but you keep looking at it, because you “don’t want to hit it, what do you do? You wind up hitting it — it’s going to be like “Oh no, there’s a rock” and Barn you’re down, you hit it. Why? Because you’d focused on it.. .You said “Oh, I hope I don’t hit it. . .I don’t want to hit it”, but if you keep looking at it, you’ll hit it. What you actually have to do to avoid that rock is to look everywhere else but at the rock — look to the side, look ahead of it, and do you know how you live your life without stumbling and falling down all the time.. it is by focusing up on the weeds that push things in your life, the things that bring you down. If you focus on them and dwell upon them, that’s where you’re going to stay, but if you learn to focus away from them, onto the glory of God, his righteousness, his mercy, his power, who he is — then you find yourself living victoriously past those moments. We have ministered people with severe depression, people who are on medications, that come through these six principles in counseling that

Maria and I have done, that, literally, have walked away from medications, living victorious lives. It is critical that you understand what righteousness really means. We are going to develop this throughout the next week. The Commitment #3, it starts off by remembering this debit sheet was changed at the cross. Would you read this out loud with me — Commitment #3: “I will remember the cost of the cross” Read 2nd Corinthians: 4: 18 with me.” We set our eyes not on what we see, but on what we can’t see. What we see will last only a short time, but what we can’t see will last forever”. Did you hear what that was? “Lord, how long do I have to suffer in this situation?” Maybe, as long as you live, but that’s a short time compared to eternity. I remember, last week, a really precious friend and I can tell this story — she has allowed it — we were talking and she was saying - we got kind of chuckled when she was talking, but she was saying “it’s kind of scary, because we’ve always been with this company, this corporation for years and years, and they’ve always given us benefits and everything else. Well, we’re getting out of that company now and my husband is going to go into his own business, and in doing this, we’re going to have to take care of our own insurance and pay the bills and we have to make more money than he actually spends and I’m totally terrified” and she goes “I’m having a semi-freakout at the moment”. I say “Whoa, whoa, wait” and she continues saying “I don’t know whether I can really support what he is doing, because this is really scary”. I said “well, just wait a minute. I’ve bought and sold a bunch of businesses throughout my life and you know what you really come to as a believer. You begin to understand that nothing really matters but hell and heaven. She kind of stared at me and I said “Really nothing matters, ~ but hell and heaven. On this planet everything else is decoration”. You have a two-story home, you have a one-story home, you have a new car, you have an older car, really it’s all decoration. It’s all going to burn up in the last fire. Now, that sounds like a radical concept, but let me tell you, you are going to be a lot less stressed out, a lot less overwhelmed, a lot less bogged under in the pit, if you’ll just learn this simple thing: nothing matters but hell and heaven. That day on the road — we thank God for being El Rio who saw us, but if everyone of us in our family had perished on Friday, in a car accident, I’ll guarantee that every one of us would agree that nothing else would matter except hell and heaven, because we would have been on the heaven side of that equation. The

rest of it is decoration. Everything, it's all decoration, and I said "Just enjoy yourself, Sis, enjoy it. Let him go out and do this and do what's wise. Help him, be a partner to him and if he does great — great and if he doesn't start something else. It's not life or death, it's not hell or heaven, it's just the decorations. Do it as unto the Lord. you've got too many decorations to fit God in. The day that you've done that, you've lost the purpose of living which is to get to know God more intimately than the day that you were born. That is our purpose for living, is to have a righteous relationship with him.

...The pastor's church was a little tiny store front church and it was called the "Almighty God Tabernacle". On a Saturday night a long time ago, apparently this pastor had called home and talked to his wife and decided he wanted to tell her that he would have to leave home, but his wife didn't answer the phone. He hung up the phone and then he goes ahead and tries again to get her. The second time, she answered, and he goes "I tried a little bit ago to get ahold of you" and she goes "Well, the phone didn't ring here" and he said "Oh, I must have misdialed", and they went on talking. Sunday came and Monday came and he was in the study Monday and the phone rang and he picked it up and this fellow said "Preacher, can I ask why you called me last Saturday" and he told the minister what his name was and the pastor said "Well, I think you must have the wrong number — I didn't call you" and the man goes "Yeah, you did, you called me" and, suddenly, the pastor realizes that he had dialed the man by mistake trying to get a hold of his wife. The man said, "No, don't apologize. Let me tell you what happened. You know I was planning to commit suicide Saturday night, but Before I did I prayed to God, if you're there and you don't want me to do this — give me a sign now and at that point my phone rang. I looked at the caller ID and it said "Almighty God" and I was too afraid to answer it. (laughter) Good name for a church at that moment,, wasn't it? But let me just tell you, in righteousness, being direct with God, you know a lot of it is going to come down to just being afraid to answer God when he talks to you. Maybe you have this kind of relationship because you're really afraid to look into the eyes of God, but if you're a child of God, who has had righteous imputed to him or her, if you are one of the children of God, you don't need to fear your God, because your God sees all the sin in your life, but he is asking you only one

thing — have a right — a straight path of righteousness with me, clear communication with me, child, and I'll bless your life as never before. In this study, you'll find that living the righteous life, literally, is the answer to all the problems in your life, where they are no longer problems in your life, but they will become opportunities for glorious moments. That's what we're going to learn on being righteous in this study. Let's pray.