

The Greek word most often translated into English as "righteousness" in the New Testament is DIKAIOSYNE. It is often translated to mean (personal) "righteousness", but it can also mean (social) "justice". Often when we talk about justice today, we think of something social or external, something we DO out there in the world (i.e., helping a charity). Although the biblical use of Dikaiosyne sometimes has that connotation (meaning), it more often describes a character trait, an innate and personal quality of what we call INTEGRITY today. It involves this idea that "I" am not two different persons, (two-faced, hypocritical, chameleon-like). Rather, "I" am just me, trying to be my best self all the time, making godly choices, whether people are around or not (not just putting on a show for others, doing the right thing only because people are watching). "I" try to live by a clear conscience and a standard of innocence according to the moral commitments I have. The Apostle Paul, for example, was under character attack by some people in Thessalonica, and he could plainly and boldly state that no one has any basis to accuse him: "You are witnesses [you, Thessalonians Christians], and God also, how pure, upright, and blameless our conduct was toward you believers (1 Thessalonians 2:10).

So, yes - dikaiosyne relates to DOING (justice), but at its core it is about BEING. It is a "who am I?" kind of characteristic. The Bible sometimes separates people into the categories of "righteous" and "wicked." The "righteous," of course, have committed to knowing, following, and loving God, but also, they seek to cultivate the virtues of integrity and honesty IN their hearts and souls.

READ & PRAY: Psalm 51

Declare aloud the following verses -

Psalm 51:1-15 NLT (A Psalm of David)

Have mercy on me, O God, because of your unfailing love. Because of your great compassion, blot out the stain of my sins.

Wash me clean from my guilt. Purify me from my sin. For I recognize my rebellion; it haunts me day and night.

Against you, and you alone, have I sinned; I have done what is evil in your sight. You will be proved right in what you say, and your judgment against me is just.

But you desire honesty from the womb, teaching me wisdom even there. Purify me from my sins, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

Oh, give me back my joy again;

Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a loyal spirit within me.

Do not banish me from your presence, and don't take your Holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and make me willing to obey you.

Unseal my lips, O Lord, that my mouth may praise you.

Declare: I am a child of God, greatly loved. We are in covenant 'marriage' with Jesus Christ, our bridegroom who gave his life for us on the cross, so we could be together.

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