

EPHESIANS 6:14

GOD'S POWERFUL PANOPLY (PART 2 – RIGHTEOUSNESS)

Piece two: Righteousness

*"The word is the subject-matter of them all; only, as a wise physician doth prepare the same drug several ways—sometimes to be taken one way, sometimes another—to make it more effectual, and [to] refresh his patient with variety; so the Lord, consulting our weakness, doth by his word, administering it to us now in this, and anon in that ordinance, for our greater delight and profit, aiming still at the same end in all, even the promoting of holiness in the hearts and lives of his people. And what are they all, but as veins and arteries by which Christ conveys the life-blood and spirits of holiness into every member of his mystical body? The Church is the garden, Christ the fountain, [and] every ordinance, as a pipe from him, to water all the beds in this garden. And why? but to make them more abundant in the fruits of righteousness."*¹

— William Gurnall

Defined.

Isaiah 11:5; also Deuteronomy 32:4; Job 37:23; Psalm 119:137-138, 142

Righteousness in imputation.

Righteousness in justification.

Righteousness in practice.

*"Some imagine that this refers to a freely bestowed righteousness, or the imputation of righteousness, by which pardon of sin is obtained. But such matters ought not, I think, to have been mentioned on the present occasion; for the subject now under discussion is a blameless life. He enjoins us to be adorned, first, with integrity, and next with a devout and holy life."*² — John Calvin

Dressed.

"Among conservative Christians there is sometime the mistaken notion that if we are truly gospel-centered we won't talk about rules or imperatives or moral exertion. We are so eager not to confuse indicatives (what God has done) and

¹ William Gurnall, *The Christian in Complete Armour* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1964), 417.

² John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries, Volume XXI*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2023), 338.

*imperatives (what we should do) that we get leery of letting biblical commands lead uncomfortably to conviction of sin. We're scared of words like diligence, effort, and duty... We know legalism (salvation by law keeping) and antinomianism (salvation without the need for law keeping) are both wrong, but antinomianism feels like a much safer danger."*³ — Kevin DeYoung

*"The details and particular ingredients of which holiness is composed in daily life, ought to be fully set forth and pressed on believers by all who profess to handle the subject. True holiness does not consist merely of believing and feeling, but of doing and bearing, and a practical exhibition of active and passive grace. Our tongues, our tempers, our natural passions and inclinations—our conduct as parents and children, masters and servants, husbands and wives, rulers and subjects—our dress, our employment of time, our behaviour in business, our demeanour in sickness and health, in riches and in poverty—all, all these are matters which are fully treated by inspired writers. They are not content with a general statement of what we should believe and feel, and how we are to have the roots of holiness planted in our hearts. They dig down lower. They go into particulars. They specify minutely what a holy man ought to do and be in his own family, and by his own fireside, if he abides in Christ. I doubt whether this sort of teaching is sufficiently attended to in the movement of the present day."*⁴ — J. C. Ryle

Defended.⁵

Reason 1: For God's glory.

Reason 2: For the gospel's reputation.

Reason 3: For the unbeliever's conscience.

Reason 4: For heaven's attainment.

Reason 5: For the believer's assurance.

Reason 6: For salvation's end.

Reason 7: For earthly happiness.

³ Kevin DeYoung, *The Hole in Our Holiness: Filling the Gap between Gospel Passion and the Pursuit of Godliness* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 19.

⁴ J. C. Ryle, *Holiness* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 2014), xv.

⁵ For a plethora of specific ways that righteousness is important to the believer's life, see Proverbs chapters 10 and 11.