

Jesus Has a Name

Episode 15

Call Upon His Name

Yahweh Tsidkenu – Part 1

As we start this episode, I once again want to remind us that our goal in studying the names of God is twofold: 1) to know our King so well that we become fully convinced—based on all the facts—that we would be foolish to put our trust in anything or anyone else (especially ourselves); and 2) to be fully convinced that all our decisions, no matter how trivial, need be made based on the reality of the character and nature of our King, which has been revealed by the name.

HIS NAME IS TO BE THE FILTER THROUGH WHICH WE PASS ALL THINGS: ALL THOUGHTS, ALL EMOTIONS, ALL EXPERIENCES, AND SO ON.

In our last episode, we discussed the name **Yahweh Shammah** and discovered that **Yahweh is There** and that “there” just happens to be wherever we are, for He abides in our **New Creation** through the presence of the Holy Spirit. Hence, we are **NEVER** ever alone. What a comforting name that is intended to secure us and stabilize our thoughts and our emotions, especially during times where we feel all alone and abandoned.

The next name we are going to discuss is one that has been extremely hard for me to believe and it has taken me a long time to accept. With that said, it has also been one of the most powerful names that has lifted me to personal freedom, victory, and has empowered me to live in peace without carrying the weight of heavy burdens that were never designed for me to carry.

Yahweh Tsidkenu. Yahweh our righteousness.¹ **Yahweh Tsidkenu** declares one of the most shocking yet glorious truths that most believers have never considered: we do not have to be good because the truth is, we cannot be good, for **Only God is Good**.²

The reality is we are not good, never have been good, and never can be, or will be, good.³ We were birthed in iniquity, and in sin we were conceived.⁴ There is not a righteous man on earth

¹ *Jeremiah 23:5-6*

² *Mark 10:18; Luke 18:19*

³ *Romans 3:10; 11:32; Galatians 3:22*

⁴ *Psalms 51:5*

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that does good and does not sin.⁵ In effect, sin defines our very existence, the very breath that we breathe.

The implication of this truth is that we need to stop trying so hard to be good, it is entirely unnatural. It is like asking a dog to meow or a cow to bark. We need to lay down our twisted “law” (from wherever it comes) which demands us to achieve some level of personal goodness to be a good Christian or a good person, and instead choose to rest in the reality that **Yahweh Tsidkenu** is our righteousness.

This name comes from the book of *Jeremiah*. “Behold, the days are coming, declares **Yahweh**, When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; and He will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land. In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely; and this is His name by which **He will be called, 'Yahweh our righteousness.'**”⁶ A similar verse in the book of *Isaiah* builds on this notion and states, “Only in **Yahweh** are righteousness and strength,”⁷

God even takes this name and applies it to those who love Him. “In that day Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this will be **her** name: **'Yahweh Is Our Righteousness.'**”⁸ I love how everything is so personal with **Yahweh** such that He even applies this amazing name to His people, imaged in Judah and Jerusalem. “**And this will be her name: 'Yahweh Is Our Righteousness.'**”

However, the Spirit makes it clear that this righteousness of God is obtained only through faith in Jesus Christ—for all those who, now and continually, believe.⁹ He says that this righteousness cannot be obtained by the **works of our hands** (by what we do for God), but only by our active belief.

Active Belief

Just to make sure we are still on the same page, since it is essential to all the names, I want to

⁵ *Ecclesiastes 7:20*

⁶ *Jeremiah 23:5-6*

⁷ *Isaiah 45:24*

⁸ *Jeremiah 33:16*

⁹ *Romans 3:22*. Note: “believe” is rendered in the present active *participle*

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reiterate, as I have done in other episodes, that biblically belief means more than just an intellectual ascension or agreement with the truth about God, but a full-on commitment to that truth demonstrated in a life where one chooses what they say and do by the truth.¹⁰ This understanding of what it means to believe is typified in **James 1:22-25**.

James 1:22-25

But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

In other words, faith is a combination of knowing the truth about God and betting our lives on that truth such that we live the truth because it has become our truth. Anything short of that is not real, it is just another form of religion. For instance, we can say Jesus is **Adonai** (the Lord) and that **Yahweh** is good, but do we live in rest believing that every detail in our lives is from His hands and that it is all good as He is working out His good, pleasing, and perfect will in our lives? If not, then there is a gap between our mental belief and our biblical belief, a gap of faith about which we need to talk to the Spirit. Another example, going back to James, is that we can stare at the perfect law of liberty, unrestrained freedom, and yet choose to still be bound by the law. That makes us a forgetful hearer and not one who abides in active belief.

With that understanding, let us get back to the name **Yahweh Tsidkenu**, “**Yahweh our Righteousness**,” and our beautiful name, “**Yahweh is our Righteousness**.” Let us consider the ramifications of this name because it goes to the very core of our identity and to our perpetual struggle with sin.

¹⁰ **Romans 9:30**

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Every single person (whether they call themselves a Christian or not) is gripped with a tension that exists at the depths of their soul between their desire to be good and the reality that they are in fact bad (completely selfish, self-seeking, mercenary at heart). I call this the “good child/bad child syndrome”. This syndrome is a heavy weight to carry, especially for Christians who are expected by others, and themselves, to be good.

As a result, far too many Christians live always striving to be good, to not be bad, to do it right, and to not sin. Dealing with God and our sin is one serious level of stress that is scary and can be quite overwhelming. But then add to that our having to deal with people and our sin, well, that is something altogether different—it is terrifying.

With God, we feel guilty, shameful, drop our heads in remorse, do our time and our deeds of penance as we work our way to “repentance,” as we try to convince Him and ourselves that we are sorry, and we will do it better next time. But largely, things are kept relationally between us.

But with people, if we are bad, our sin is exposed for others to see and it gets passed around. As a result, we are looked down upon, do not get the respect and honor from other Christians for being a godly man or a godly woman, and we will not be allowed to advance in the social structure we call “church” and “ministry” and “leadership” and so on.

As a result, those who are best at managing this good child/bad child syndrome essentially learn how to hide and how to lie to others, to themselves, and to God. Those who are the professionals in religion are probably the best at it. I know I was. It is terrible to think, but if you walk around any church you are probably walking around some of the best liars and pretenders in the world.

And then there are those who cannot manage this syndrome. They tend to give into their sin, deciding that they are just sinners, are too broken, and cannot ever really have victory, so they become those who need ministering to by those who are on the “good” side of this syndrome, by those who are better at hiding and lying. As I said, it is a terrible weight to carry for Christians who are expected by others, and themselves, to be good.

I am sure I have lost a lot of you right here. But please stick with me. I know we tend to honor men and women who we believe are godly. And what I am saying does not mean that there are

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not godly men and women out there. But unless those we look to with any sort of honor identify their own name as **Yahweh is our Righteousness**, then I am sorry, they are probably quite skilled at hiding and lying. Unless they are abounding with mercy and acceptance without judgment and condemnation, fully convinced of their own leavening (a complete penetration of sin all throughout their being), they are hiding and lying.

And because our system of religion is built around this good child/bad child syndrome, we tend to idolize those who are the best at hiding and lying, and then we burn down these same idols if they ever make a mistake or disappoint us with their sin. We do not let them be just a person that God is transforming in His timing and in His ways, we expect them to be more.

Let me continue for a moment with this notion of our idolatry of Christian ministry leaders. Just because someone is gifted by the Spirit to perform visible functions, whether in church or in religious ministries, and though they may be gifted in their natural abilities to lead, teach, preach, play music, and so on, none of that is equivalent to their having been transformed by the Spirit of God. Gifting and transformation are fundamentally two different things—two different concepts that are not to be blended.

The problem is that God does not necessarily wait until a person is transformed before He sets a person in the ministry. Look at Peter. Having recently denied Jesus three different times, the next thing we see is Jesus telling Peter to feed the sheep, or to minister to those who needed care. Yet, Peter was still a mess who would rather go back to fishing. He was not ready to fish for men.¹¹

Transformation is not up to the person; rather, it is up to the Spirit in terms of the timing and the areas of their transformation. In fact, the command for us to be transformed, is rendered in the *present passive imperative*—hence the use of the *passive* voice declares that this is God's job and not something we can do. Our job is to present ourselves to Him as a living sacrifice (for the purpose of death), His job is to effect the transformation through renewing our mind (which by the way is a noun and not a verb).¹²

¹¹ **John 21:1-17**

¹² **Romans 12:1-2**

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In other words, a renewed mind is a state of existence that comes as God wages war against all the wrong belief and unbelief in our soul and exchanges it for truth. Moreover, the Spirit does not do it all at once just so someone can go do ministry the right way. No, He transforms us when we are willing and all according to His timing and His plan.

Therefore, for us to idolize and either lift-up or burn-down our idols, based on whether someone does things right or wrong, is all simply an expression of this good child/bad child syndrome and our sick addiction to legalism. None of that is from the Spirit.

And it does not help that usually those same people have become really good liars and know how to hide those unseemly areas of their life that are not transformed, such that we are shocked when we realize that they are just like we are. This whole system is sick and needs to be brought in line with the Spirit.

For instance, Peter did not do it right after God set him in ministry, and God did not expect him to do it right before he was assigned to the task. The Spirit had to work things out as they went down the path, even though it meant other people stumbled and fell into sin because of Peter's issues.

Peter had a religious legalism and a racial bigotry that continued to corrupt him throughout major parts of his life, and the Spirit of God was continually bringing correction into his life, even publicly. Still his failures did not disqualify him from the tasks God gave him.¹³

THE CONCEPTS OF GIFTING AND TRANSFORMATION ARE TWO DISTINCT ISSUES AND THEY ARE NOT TO BE BLENDED.

With that said, this good child/bad child syndrome is at the core of our shame and our religious legalism which keeps us bound to either our own delusion of goodness or our resolution towards failure. In fact, this good child/bad child syndrome is the root from where the “**works of our hands**” are derived, which is just a way to describe all our foolish attempts to be good for God and to please God. *Haggai* discusses the **works of our hands** and how they are meaningless to

¹³ See *Acts 9:32-11:17; Galatians 2:11-14*

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God and woefully inadequate.¹⁴

These foolish “**works of our hands**” stand in 100% contrast with grace—the works of faith. These two things (the “**work of our hands**” and our “works of faith”) do not comingle, and they are in no way equivalent—one is from the strength of man (from our *flesh*) and the other is from the Spirit of God. And even though at times they may look equivalent, especially in the realm of religious deeds and ministry, the works of our *flesh* are always fighting in opposition to the works of the Spirit, such that our choices are never free from this conflict. In fact, the *flesh* purposefully and intentionally sets its desire against the desires of the Spirit.¹⁵

Now, this good child/bad child syndrome tends to have a dominant hold in our lives because it is built on the original lie that has been passed down to all generations. In the beginning, with Eve in the garden, mankind bought into the lie that they could be like God—all it would take is one little bite.¹⁶ As a result, humanity is always on some sort of quest to prove that we can be good like God, despite our obvious darkness and inability to be good. This delusion has manifested itself in many ways throughout the centuries.

Historically we have seen this lie of personal goodness play out in the religions of the world, and the way they used a pretense of goodness to rule and exert power over others. But today this lie of “personal goodness” is not exclusively found in the realm of religion, rather, it is manifest everywhere we look. It is the heartbeat of modern-day social politics.

You are deemed to be a “good person” if you support certain causes propagated by various social/political movements; and if you do not agree with them, you are essentially vilified, blacklisted, and treated as an evil plague on society that must be managed and even put down. And somehow, in our upside-down world, we have convinced ourselves that vilifying, blacklisting, and treating others as a plague (as hateful as that maybe) is good and for the greater good. It is all so ironically twisted.

This dynamic between our desire to be good and our baseline evil nature is the fuel for the

¹⁴ **Haggai 2:10-17**

¹⁵ **Galatians 5:17**

¹⁶ **Genesis 3:1-7**

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good child/bad child syndrome, and, as I said before, it is the root of all our shame.

We want to be good; it is a shared value across humanity in every culture. However, we cannot, for our sinful and self-serving nature compromises our every attempt to be good. Yet at the same time, we do not want others to know about the darkness that lurks in our soul. We do not even want to admit to ourselves that we do “good” things because of what we get out of it and how it makes us feel about ourselves (which just proves our innate selfishness). And if “they” (whoever matters to us) knew what was really motivating our choices, and what we really think and do, we are afraid that we would be vilified, not wanted, not respected, not loved, and not adored, and someone who needs to be managed at best, and put down at worst.

Therefore, we attempt to hide our darkness, live with the shame of our failure and corruptness, and try and try again to be good. Mark my word, in each-and-every soul that does not know Jesus by the name **Yahweh Tsidkenu**, there are piles upon piles of shame comprised of all the “would have’s,” “could have’s,” and “should have’s” of their life—all the ways they wish they could have been different and should have done it different.

And this is where our religion comes in to play. Recognizing this as a perfect opportunity, religion makes the **works of our hands**—all our attempts to be good—seem so acceptable and proper and fitting for good Christianity. After all, serving God and serving others for God is a way to temporarily silence our shame and once again make us feel good about ourselves, at least for a while. It is also the way to earn respect and honor in our respective religious communities. It provides a way to make a solid penance before God and man for all our failures and inadequacies that we keep hidden from everybody.

The Delusion of Sinfulness

This is tricky and can be confusing. Mainstream Christianity teaches that man is inherently sinful and needs a savior (which is true). And at some level people accept this truth, which is why so many people raise their hands, say the “sinner’s prayer,” and “accept Jesus.” However, based on how far too many believers tend to live, it is quite clear that they believe their salvation is

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about an afterlife, eternity, heaven, and not about their now.¹⁷

They do not realize that Jesus came to now save us from ourselves, to free us from our *flesh*, through the true knowledge of Him who called us. Instead, they live under the same yoke of bondage to which they have always been subjected, some form of legalism, worthless elementary principles, based on a presumption of personal goodness which prescribes what they can and cannot do (whether that is the Law, their own law, or the law of others that is placed over their lives).

These requirements are couched in what it takes to find the favor and blessing of God, what it takes to give Him a reason to lift us up, honor us before others, and bless us (which seems to be what most people want out of God)—great blessing and the abundant life.

Yet, we find that when we attempt to follow these rules, regulations, and methodologies, they do not get us anywhere with God. Therefore, we try harder. Many of us fail with every single attempt, and so we remain buried in our shame. Whereas others are better at keeping the rules and conforming their behavior, and they in effect become the best at lying and hiding and manipulating others to get that “blessed” life.

And what is so confusing is that there is often seemingly good fruit that is born out of the **works of our hands**, as the lives of others are positively impacted for Jesus. Surely Jesus would be pleased with such results, wouldn’t He?

Jesus spoke of this dynamic and He made it clear that all manner of religious good deeds, even casting out demons **in His name**, performing miracles **in His name**, and prophesying **in His name**, means absolutely nothing if such works were not authorized by the Spirit. In fact, to those who confused the **works of their hands** with the works of the Spirit (though they may look exactly alike), He will say, “Depart from me, you who practice lawlessness.”¹⁸

We must not be confused by the visible outcomes of ministry, and we cannot use these outcomes to justify the **works of our hands**, regardless of how amazing the outcomes and how

¹⁷ Note: **John 17:3** (rendered in the *present* tense) says that this **now** is eternal life that we might **now** know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent.

¹⁸ See **Matthew 7:21-23**

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much people are blessed. **Remember, the source matters, the source is everything!**

Then there is the tendency of our religion to keep trying over-and-over again to find new ways to contain the darkness by exploring new ways of being “good” (of course, **in His name**) to get God to give us what we seek, new forms of ministry and service, and new ways of experiencing God. Hence, the religion of Christianity is always going through some new trend, some new movement, some new way for the people to earn favor and blessing with God, or some new way to experience God. This cycle of leavening the loaf just goes on, and on, and on, and on.¹⁹

Yet, there is no freedom in that belief system, only bondage and shame. And, ironically, any form of legalism – any method or rule to earn God’s favor and blessing – just provokes more sin, it does not contain it, it does not control it, it does not impede it, and it does not stop it. It only entices it and highlights it in our lives.²⁰ That is the nature of law.

We must realize that these rules, regulations, and methodologies are not spiritual. They are manmade and all our attempts to meet them amounts to the **works of our hands** which God completely loathes.²¹ They stand in 100% opposition to the name **Yahweh Tsidkenu**. They are legalism at its finest and are entirely worthless when it comes to active faith—and we know without an active faith, it is impossible to please God.²²

The rules of religion, which enable us to create and live in a social hierarchy of delusional goodness, are as addicting as a drug, for it gives us a way to hide the shame and darkness of our soul and it gives us a path of achievement.

If I do “good” and follow the rules better than others, I will be respected and honored for it, I might even be made a ministry leader. As a result, absent a downright explosive invasion of the Holy Spirit, I do not ever truly have to come to grips with the darkness in my soul. After all, I am keeping the rules and I am keeping them better than you! I can fake transformation better than you, and I can be more “godly” than you.

This whole dynamic of religion and religious hierarchy enables us to stay focused on the

¹⁹ **Matthew 13:33**

²⁰ **Romans 7:7-13, 3:20, 5:13, 20, 6:14**

²¹ **See Haggai 2:14-17**

²² **Hebrews 11:6**

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failures of others and the darkness in the souls of others, while largely ignoring ours altogether. And nothing has changed for centuries. This is how the religious leaders of Jesus' day acted.²³ This religious hierarchical delusion is based on the idea that the rules are "good" and to the extent I can keep them better than you, I am good, at least more so than you. And that is all that truly matters in this life. **But it is all a lie, and the masses are consumed by this lie.**

ONLY GOD IS GOOD.

THE SOURCE MATTERS, THE SOURCE IS EVERYTHING!²⁴

Only in **Yahweh Tsidkenu** can one find true righteousness, for He alone is righteous. This delusion that we can be good for God and for others, just might be **THE LIE** or that scary **Deluding Influence**, which the Spirit warned about would come upon the people of God during the Last Days, leading many (not a few but many) to apostasy, to a great falling away.²⁵

The Spirit tells us that God will send this delusion upon those in His household because they did not believe the truth but took pleasure in wickedness (or lawlessness—things not authorized by the Father). Just like those who performed all those religious acts **in His name** (miracles, healing, casting out demons, prophecy), and to whom He will say, "Depart from me."

**IT IS TERRIFYING HOW THIS LIE PERMEATES THE RELIGION OF CHRISTIANITY,
YET THIS IS THE REASON WHY CHRISTIANITY HAS A SICK OBSESSION WITH SIN.**

Only **Yahweh** is good; we are not! There is no way we can be good for our humanity has been thoroughly corrupted. As I mentioned at the beginning, the Spirit says that we were conceived in sin. It is our nature. We must get over it. In fact, there is none righteous not even one.²⁶

Thus, we need His goodness and His righteousness through-and-through if we are going to be legitimately good, for only **Yahweh Tsikdenu** is truly righteous. We do not need some of His righteousness, we need all His righteousness, because we have none. We just have a delusion of righteousness, and that is just a figment of our imagination, a puff of smoke, an apparition that

²³ See **Matthew 7:1-5; 23:23-33**

²⁴ **Matthew 19:17; Mark 10:18; Luke 18:19**

²⁵ **2 Thessalonians 2:11-12; Matthew 24:10**

²⁶ **Romans 3:10-18; Ecclesiastes 7:20.** See also **John 8:7**

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is supported by our sick religion.

We will stop right here and pick up in our next episode as we ask ourselves, what does it mean to live out the name **Yahweh Tsikdenu**. We spent this episode focused on the problem (our religious delusion fueled by legalism) and in our next episode we will focus on the solution, the name which should be our name, **Yahweh is our Righteousness**.