THE QUESTION

What did the early Christians believe about righteousness?

Asked by a THF member on May 22, 2026 · published November 9, 2026 · 14 numbered quotations · the 72 early Christian passages and 417 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/what-did-the-early-christians-believe-about-righteousness

The short answer *Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words*

Early Christian writers taught that God is perfectly righteous and that sinners are made righteous through Christ and justified by faith, as Abraham was, not by their own works or rituals. They also taught that those justified must then live righteously, keeping Christ's commands with love, mercy and holiness.

LIBRARY ONLY	This study was written only from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed at the back, with a link to read it.
HOW IT WAS MADE	Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.
SHARING WITH AN AI?	Every quotation here comes from The Historic Faith's library. If you paste this study into an AI, anything it adds beyond these pages comes from that AI, not from us.

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POINT 1 OF 7

God is both righteous and good

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Irenaeus answers the claim that a good God and a just God are two different gods. He says the one Father is just and also merciful, and His goodness comes first. Origen adds that there is no unrighteousness in God and that all His judgments are righteous.

1 "He is good, merciful, and patient, and saves whom He ought to save. His goodness does not abandon Him in the exercise of justice, nor is His wisdom reduced; He saves those He should save and judges those worthy of judgment."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Against Heresies: Book III* (c. 175–202 AD) **Source 30, page 8** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

2 "He is a righteous and holy Lord, Revelation 16:5, 7, and His judgments are in righteousness, and since He is righteous, He orders all things righteously."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Commentary on John* 1 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 44, page 9** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 2 OF 7

Christ's righteousness covers our sins

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

The Epistle to Diognetus says that God gave His Son for us, the righteous One for the unrighteous, because nothing else could cover our sins. Origen reads Paul's words to mean that Christ was made righteousness for us.

3 "For what else could cover our sins but His righteousness? By whom else could we, the wicked and ungodly, be justified, but by the only Son of God?"

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Mathetes,** *Epistle to Diognetus* (c. 80–200 AD) **Source 4, page 7** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

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4 “That Christ is righteousness in relation to us is clear from the words, “Who was made to us from God wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.””

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Commentary on John* 1 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 44, page 9** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 3 OF 7

We are justified by faith, like Abraham

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Clement of Rome says we are not justified by our own wisdom, godliness or works, but by faith. Irenaeus and Cyprian both point to Abraham, whose faith was counted as righteousness, as the pattern for everyone who believes God.

5 “And we, too, being called by His will in Christ Jesus, are not justified by ourselves, nor by our own wisdom, or understanding, or godliness, or works we have accomplished in holiness of heart; but by that faith through which, from the beginning, Almighty God has justified all people; to whom be glory forever and ever.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Rome,** *First Epistle to the Corinthians* **Source 71, page 10** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

6 “This is why it was counted to him by the Lord as righteousness. For faith towards God justifies a man; that is why Abraham said, “I will stretch forth my hand to the most high God, who made the heaven and the earth.””

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Against Heresies: Book IV* (c. 175–202 AD) **Source 26, page 8** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

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7 “For if Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness, then surely whoever believes God and lives by faith is found righteous, and is already blessed in faithful Abraham, and is shown to be justified, as the blessed Apostle Paul proves when he says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. You know, then, that those who are of faith, these are the children of Abraham. But the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles through faith, announced beforehand to Abraham that all nations would be blessed in him; therefore those who are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.””

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Cyprian,** *Epistles* (c. 248–258 AD) **Source 54, page 9** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 4 OF 7

Circumcision was a sign, not righteousness

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

In his talk with Trypho, Justin points out that Abraham was justified before he was circumcised. He concludes that circumcision was given as a sign and was not what made Abraham righteous.

8 “For when Abraham himself was not circumcised, he was justified and blessed because of the faith he placed in God, as Scripture tells us.”

later in the same passage

“Furthermore, Scripture and the facts force us to admit that he received circumcision as a sign, not for righteousness.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Justin Martyr,** *Dialogue with Trypho* (c. 130–165 AD) **Source 19, page 8** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 5 OF 7

Believers must also live righteously

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Cyprian warns that even great spiritual works do not bring someone into the kingdom without walking in the right way. The Second Epistle of Clement asks who will speak for us unless we are found with works of holiness and righteousness.

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9 “There is need of righteousness, so that a person may be approved by God the Judge.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Cyprian,** *Treatises* (c. 248–258 AD) **Source 53, page 9** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

10 “And who will be our advocate unless we are found to have works of holiness and righteousness?”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Rome,** *Second Epistle* 6 (c. 88–99 AD) **Source 5, page 7** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 6 OF 7

Righteousness shows itself in love and mercy

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Hermas lists practicing righteousness alongside caring for widows, orphans and the needy, and showing hospitality. Aristides describes Christians who honor parents, judge fairly, are kind to their neighbors and do good even to their enemies.

11 “Then these follow with them: helping widows, looking after orphans and the needy, rescuing the servants of God from necessities, being hospitable—for in hospitality good-doing finds a field—never opposing anyone, being quiet, having fewer needs than all men, reverencing the aged, practicing righteousness, watching the brotherhood, bearing insolence, being long-suffering, encouraging those who are sick in soul, not casting those who have fallen into sin out of the faith, but turning them back and restoring them to peace of mind, admonishing sinners, not oppressing debtors and the needy, and if there are any other actions like these.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Hermas,** *Shepherd* (c. 90–150 AD) **Source 9, page 7** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

12 “They honor father and mother, and they show kindness to those near them. And whenever they are judges, they judge fairly.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Aristides,** *Apology* 15 (c. 125–140 AD) **Source 18, page 8** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

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POINT 7 OF 7

God's commands can really be kept

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Hermas is told that the commandments are not too hard once a person decides they can be kept. Irenaeus says Christ taught His followers to obey God's commandments, overcome greed through good works, and follow Him.

13 “If you settle it in your mind that they can be kept, then you will keep them easily, and they will not be hard.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Hermas,** *Shepherd* (c. 90–150 AD) **Source 13, page 7** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

14 “But He taught that they should obey the commandments God enjoined from the beginning, eliminate their greed by good works, and follow Christ.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Against Heresies: Book IV* (c. 175–202 AD) **Source 27, page 8** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

THE LIMITS

What these passages don’t tell us

- These passages do not explain in detail how faith and good works fit together in being justified.
- They do not settle how fully a believer can become righteous in this life.
- A word-for-word match shows that a quotation really is in our text. It does not show that our reading of it is right, or who wrote each work.

WHERE EVERY QUOTE CAME FROM

The Sources

The 72 early Christian passages and 417 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages first (sources 1–72, grouped by writer, earliest first), then Bible verses in The Faith Once Delivered Bible (sources 73–200, in Bible order), then 289 more verses THF links to these passages, by reference. **Quote 1, page 2** beside a source shows where the study quotes it. Passages are in THF’s updated English unless marked “1885 English” (the Roberts–Donaldson translation, public domain). “… [continues online]” marks a passage the library gave only in part. **On paper?** At

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thehistoricfaith.com, Bible verses are in the **Audio Bible** and early Christian writings in the **Library** (search for the title).

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *72 passages from 21 writers*

Didache, *c. 50–120 AD · source 1*

1 *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* 4 (1885 English; on point 6) shall judge righteously, you shall not respect persons in reproving for transgressions… [continues online] **read ›**

Barnabas, *c. 70–132 AD · sources 2–3*

2 *Epistle of Barnabas* (1885 English; on point 6) “shalt not be joined in soul with the haughty, but thou shalt be reckoned with the righteous and lowly… [continues online] **read ›**

3 *Epistle of Barnabas* (1885 English; on point 4) is imputed to thee for righteousness: behold, I have made thee the father of those nations who believe in the Lord while in [a state of] uncircumcision… [continues online] **read ›**

Mathetes, *c. 80–200 AD · source 4*

4 *Epistle to Diognetus* (1885 English) **Quote 3, page 2** “the wickedness of many should be hid in a single righteous One, and that the righteousness of One should justify many transgressors… [continues online] **read ›**

Clement of Rome, *c. 88–99 AD · sources 5–7*

5 *Second Epistle* 6 (1885 English) **Quote 10, page 5** “who shall be our advocate, unless we be found possessed of works of holiness and righteousness… [continues online] **read ›**

6 *Second Epistle* 17 (on point 5) This means the day of His appearing, when He will come and redeem us, each one according to his works. And the unbelievers will see His glory and power. And… [continues online] **read ›**

7 *Second Epistle* 8 (1885 English; on point 5) “brethren, by doing the will of the Father, and keeping the flesh holy, and observing the commandments of the Lord, we shall obtain eternal life… [continues online] **read ›**

Hermas, *c. 90–150 AD · sources 8–14*

8 *Shepherd* (on point 5) listen,” he said, “about faith. There are two angels with a person. One is of righteousness, and the other is of iniquity.” And I said to him, “How, sir, am… [continues online] **read ›**

9 *Shepherd* **Quote 11, page 5** “all will live to God who keep these commandments and walk in them… [continues online] **read ›**

10 *Shepherd* (1885 English; on point 7) “the commandments of the Lord, and you will be approved, and inscribed among the number of those who observe His commands.] And if you do any good beyond what is… [continues online] **read ›**

11 *Shepherd* (1885 English; on point 5) “commandment exhibits the deeds of faith, that you may trust the works of the angel of righteousness, and doing them you may live to God… [continues online] **read ›**

12 *Shepherd* (on point 7) I was sitting in my house and praising the Lord for all that I had seen, I was thinking about the commandments: that they are excellent, powerful, glorious, and able… [continues online] **read ›**

13 *Shepherd* **Quote 13, page 6** finished the twelve commandments and said to me, "You now have these commandments. Live by them, and urge your hearers to do the same, so that their repentance may be… [continues online] **read ›**

14 *Shepherd* (on point 7) the Lord," he said, "and keep His commandments." Ecclesiastes 12:13 For if you keep God's commandments, you will be strong in everything you do, and everything you do… [continues online] **read ›**

Ignatius of Antioch, *c. 98–117 AD · sources 15–16*

15 *Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians* (1885 English; on point 6) man [truly] making a profession of faith sinneth; nor does he that possesses love hate any one… [continues online] **read ›**

16 *Epistles of Ignatius* (1885 English; on point 3) be ye steadfast, “for the just shall live by faith;” be ye… [continues online] **read ›**

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Polycarp, *c. 100–155 AD · source 17*

17 *Epistle to the Philippians* (1885 English; on point 7) us teach, first of all, ourselves to walk in the commandments of the Lord… [continues online] **read ›**

Aristides, *c. 125–140 AD · source 18*

18 *Apology* 15 **Quote 12, page 5** "if any righteous man among them passes from the world, they rejoice… [continues online] **read ›**

Justin Martyr, *c. 130–165 AD · sources 19–24*

19 *Dialogue with Trypho* **Quote 8, page 4** "Scripture and the facts force us to admit that he received circumcision as a sign, not for righteousness. So, it was rightly recorded that the soul not circumcised on the… [continues online] **read ›**

20 *Dialogue with Trypho* "what in the law of Moses is naturally good, and pious, and righteous, and… [continues online] **read ›**

21 *Dialogue with Trypho* and we have been sinning. Therefore we have gone astray and become all unclean, and all our righteousness is like the rags of a woman set apart; and we have… [continues online] **read ›**

22 *Dialogue with Trypho* (on point 3) Abraham through similar faith. For as he believed the voice of God and it was credited to him for righteousness, in the same way we, having believed God's voice… [continues online] **read ›**

23 *Dialogue with Trypho* (on point 4) hearts, along with their hope in this Christ, and wish to perform the eternal and natural acts of righteousness and piety, yet choose to live with the Christians and the… [continues online] **read ›**

24 *Dialogue with Trypho* (1885 English; on point 6) "since all righteousness is divided into two branches, namely, in so far as it regards God and men, whoever, says the Scripture, loves the Lord God with all the heart… [continues online] **read ›**

Tatian, *c. 150–180 AD · source 25*

25 *Diatessaron* 28 (1885 English; on point 7) "10:19a You know the commandments. 45 If you would enter into life, keep the commandments… [continues online] **read ›**

Irenaeus, *c. 175–202 AD · sources 26–31*

26 *Against Heresies: Book IV* (1885 English) **Quote 6, page 3** "it was accounted to him by the Lord for righteousness… [continues online] **read ›**

27 *Against Heresies: Book IV* (1885 English) **Quote 14, page 6** "He taught that they should obey the commandments which God enjoined from the beginning, and do away with their former covetousness by good works, and follow after Christ… [continues online] **read ›**

28 *Against Heresies: Book IV* (on point 3) "of the law or by hearing with faith? Just as Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness. Know therefore, that those who are of faith are… [continues online] **read ›**

29 *Against Heresies: Book IV* (on point 7) gained the knowledge of good and evil. It is good to obey God, to believe in Him, and to keep His commandments, and this is the true life for humans… [continues online] **read ›**

30 *Against Heresies: Book III* (1885 English) **Quote 1, page 2** "calls forth judgment, and judgment, when it is executed with justice, will pass on to wisdom… [continues online] **read ›**

31 *Against Heresies: Book IV* (1885 English; on point 3) "believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness." In the first place, [he believed] that He was the maker of heaven and earth, the only God… [continues online] **read ›**

Clement of Alexandria, *c. 190–215 AD · sources 32–35*

32 *Stromata* 2.6 (on point 3) "divine benevolence, and benevolence resulting in beneficence. And if it was counted to Abraham as righteousness when he believed, and if we are the seed of Abraham, then we also… [continues online] **read ›**

33 *Stromata* 5.1 (on point 3) "to Abraham, on believing, righteousness was reckoned… [continues online] **read ›**

34 *Stromata* 6.14 (on point 1) "God's righteousness is good, and His goodness is righteous… [continues online] **read ›**

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35 *Exhortation to the Heathen* 6 (on point 1) “justice always follows Him, avenging those who violate the divine law… [continues online] **read ›**

Tertullian, *c. 196–220 AD · sources 36–40*

36 *Against Marcion* 8 that not the death of the soul is meant, but that of the body—"but the spirit is life because of righteousness," Romans 8:10, it follows that this life… [continues online] **read ›**

37 *Against Marcion* 8 (on point 3) “is He who removes men from confidence in the law to faith in the gospel… [continues online] **read ›**

38 *Against Marcion* 40 (on point 3) of whose faith, if not Abraham's? For since Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness, Galatians 3:6, and since for that reason he deserved… [continues online] **read ›**

39 *On the Resurrection of the Flesh* 23 (on point 1) “the righteousness of God, he means that judgment which… [continues online] **read ›**

40 *On the Resurrection of the Flesh* 47 (on point 5) mortal body, that you should obey it," and that you should yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin. But "yield yourselves to God, as those that are alive… [continues online] **read ›**

Origen, *c. 215–254 AD · sources 41–48*

41 *Commentary on John* 2 (on point 1) righteousness and judgment that he falls short in no point of absolute righteousness and absolute justice, just as no painter of a picture can give to the image all the… [continues online] **read ›**

42 *Commentary on John* 6 (1885 English; on point 2) “from that righteousness is formed the righteousness which is in each individual, so that there are in the saved many righteousnesses, whence also it is written, For the Lord is… [continues online] **read ›**

43 *Commentary on Matthew* 10 of being cast outside. For it is not our nature that causes evil in us, but voluntary choice that works evil. And in the same way, our nature is not… [continues online] **read ›**

44 *Commentary on John* 1 **Quotes 2, 4, pages 2, 3** “7:18. He is a righteous and holy Lord, Revelation 16:5, 7, and His judgments… [continues online] **read ›**

45 *De Principiis (On First Principles)* 5 (on point 1) “neither goodness without justice, nor justice without goodness, can display the real dignity of the divine nature… [continues online] **read ›**

46 *Against Celsus* 64 (1885 English; on point 2) “being Himself righteousness, He is partaken of by the righteous… [continues online] **read ›**

47 *Commentary on John* 1 these two so as to find the difference between them. Now it says in Psalm 44, "You have loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore You are anointed above Your fellows… [continues online] **read ›**

48 *Commentary on Matthew* 12 (on point 2) occasion from these things, you will say that the righteous bear the surname of Christ who is Righteousness, and the wise of Christ who is Wisdom, 1 Corinthians 1:30… [continues online] **read ›**

Gregory Thaumaturgus, *c. 240–270 AD · sources 49–50*

49 *Oration to Origen* 1 “of it, if perhaps we were able to receive it. He also compelled us, if I may say so, to practice righteousness on the basis of the soul's own… [continues online] **read ›**

50 *Oration to Origen* 1 (1885 English) “righteousness, which assigns what is just to each… [continues online] **read ›**

Cyprian, *c. 248–258 AD · sources 51–55*

51 *Treatises* (1885 English; on point 5) “earnest in righteous works, whereby sins may be purged… [continues online] **read ›**

52 *Epistles* I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. From now on there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall… [continues online] **read ›**

53 *Treatises* (1885 English) **Quote 9, page 5** “7:22-23 There is need of righteousness, that one may deserve well of God the Judge… [continues online] **read ›**

54 *Epistles* **Quote 7, page 4** “who is more a priest of the Most High God than our… [continues online] **read ›**

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55 *Epistles* (1885 English; on point 5) “2:5 Now he repents, who, remembering the divine precept, with meekness and patience, and obeying the priests of God, deserves well of the Lord by his obedience and his… [continues online] **read ›**

Apostolic Constitutions, *c. 250–380 AD · sources 56–57*

56 *Apostolic Constitutions* (on point 6) who entrusted this duty to him will examine his accounts. Distribute to all who are in need with righteousness, and use for yourselves the things that belong to the Lord… [continues online] **read ›**

57 *Apostolic Constitutions* (on point 5) “righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him… [continues online] **read ›**

Archelaus, *c. 270–300 AD · sources 58–59*

58 *Disputation with Manes* 1 (on point 4) “him not be circumcised. For neither of these is anything, but only the keeping of the commandments of God… [continues online] **read ›**

59 *Disputation with Manes* 1 (on point 5) “and many are still perishing. I mean those who have not chosen to give themselves to works of righteousness. But only those who have received Him, and who still receive… [continues online] **read ›**

Methodius, *c. 270–311 AD · source 60*

60 *Oration Concerning Simeon and Anna* 1 (on point 2) God, the subscribed sanction, as it were, of so many and such great blessings might make the justifying gifts of grace sure and unquestionable rights for those who have obtained… [continues online] **read ›**

Lactantius, *c. 290–320 AD · sources 61–67*

61 *Divine Institutes* 17 he may buy it for a small price, or will he tell him, so that he may buy it at a high price? It clearly seems foolish to choose to… [continues online] **read ›**

62 *Divine Institutes* 18 do the kinds of things he described. Now I see that a greater task is required of me: to show why God wanted to hide justice under the appearance of… [continues online] **read ›**

63 *Divine Institutes* 15 and all its power and method are in the second. But piety is nothing else than the knowledge of God, as Trismegistus most truly defined it, as we have said… [continues online] **read ›**

64 *Divine Institutes* 9 (on point 1) “justice is another thing, which God has set forth to all as uniform and simple. And he who is ignorant of God must also be ignorant of justice… [continues online] **read ›**

65 *Epitome of the Divine Institutes* 58 (1885 English) “it is justice only which God requires… [continues online] **read ›**

66 *On the Anger of God* 7 (1885 English) “the worship of God is ascribed to justice… [continues online] **read ›**

67 *Epitome of the Divine Institutes* 59 (on point 6) hold to the way of justice, which leads to life. Now the first duty of justice is to acknowledge God as a parent, to fear Him as a master, and… [continues online] **read ›**

Clement of Rome · *sources 68–72*

68 *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (1885 English) “in immortality, splendour in righteousness, truth in perfect confidence, faith in assurance, self-control in holiness… [continues online] **read ›**

69 *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (on point 6) us to our former proper and holy practice of brotherly love. For such conduct is the gate of righteousness, which is open for the attainment of life, as it is… [continues online] **read ›**

70 *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (1885 English; on point 3) Abram believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness… [continues online] **read ›**

71 *First Epistle to the Corinthians* **Quote 5, page 3** “by that faith through which, from the beginning, Almighty… [continues online] **read ›**

72 *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (1885 English; on point 5) “us take (for instance) Enoch, who, being found righteous in obedience, was translated, and death was never known to happen to him… [continues online] **read ›**

THE BIBLE *128 verses, The Faith Once Delivered Bible (Old Testament from the Septuagint), in Bible order*

73 **Genesis 15:6** Abram believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. **read ›**

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74 **Genesis 30:33** And my righteousness shall answer for me tomorrow, for that is my wages before you: every one among the goats that is not spotted and white-marked, and every one among the lambs that is not gray, shall be stolen property in my possession." **read ›**

75 **Exodus 20:6** and showing mercy to thousands, to those who love me and to those who keep my statutes. **read ›**

76 **Leviticus 19:15** You shall do no unrighteousness in judgment. You shall not show partiality to the poor, nor by any means show favor to the mighty; in righteousness you shall judge your neighbor. **read ›**

77 **Leviticus 22:31** You shall keep my commandments and do them. **read ›**

78 **Leviticus 26:3** If you walk in my statutes and keep my commandments and do them, **read ›**

79 **Deuteronomy 5:10** and showing mercy to thousands, to those who love me and to those who keep my statutes. **read ›**

80 **Deuteronomy 6:17** You shall surely keep the commandments of the Lord your God, the testimonies and the ordinances that he commanded you. **read ›**

81 **Deuteronomy 6:25** And it shall be an act of mercy for us, if we take care to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he commanded us." **read ›**

82 **Deuteronomy 7:11** So you shall keep the commandments and the ordinances and these judgments that I command you today, to do them. **read ›**

83 **Deuteronomy 10:13** to keep the commandments of the Lord your God and his ordinances that I command you today, that it may be well with you? **read ›**

84 **Deuteronomy 11:27** the blessing, if you hear the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you today; **read ›**

85 **Deuteronomy 12:28** Take care and listen, and you shall do all the words that I command you, so that it may go well with you and with your sons forever, if you do what is pleasing and good before the Lord your God. **read ›**

86 **Deuteronomy 13:18** if you listen to the voice of the Lord your God, to keep his commandments, all that I command you today, to do what is good and pleasing before the Lord your God. (Septuagint Deuteronomy 13:19 (Deuteronomy 13:18 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

87 **Deuteronomy 30:16** If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you today, to love the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his ordinances and his judgments, then you shall live and be many, and the Lord your God shall bless you in all the land that you are entering to inherit. **read ›**

88 **Deuteronomy 32:4** God—true are his works, and all his ways are judgment; God is faithful, and there is no unrighteousness; righteous and holy is the Lord. **read ›**

89 **1 Kings 2:3** and keep the charge of the Lord your God, to walk in his ways, to keep his commandments and ordinances and judgments that are written in the law of Moses, so that you may understand what you do in all that I command you, **read ›**

90 **Psalms 3:2** Many say of my soul, "There is no salvation for him in his God." Pause. (Septuagint Psalm 3:3 (Psalm 3:2 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

91 **Psalms 7:11** God is a righteous judge, and strong, and patient, not bringing on anger every day. (Septuagint Psalm 7:12 (Psalm 7:11 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

92 **Psalms 11:7** For the Lord is righteous and has loved righteous deeds; his face has seen uprightness. (Septuagint Psalm 10:7 (Psalm 11:7 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

93 **Psalms 12:8** The ungodly walk all around; according to your loftiness you have greatly cared for the sons of men. (Septuagint Psalm 11:9 (Psalm 12:8 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

94 **Psalms 33:5** He loves acts of mercy and judgment; the earth is full of the mercy of the Lord. (Septuagint Psalm 32:5 (Psalm 33:5 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

95 **Psalms 50:6** And the heavens will declare his righteousness, for God is judge. Pause. (Septuagint Psalm 49:6 (Psalm 50:6 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

96 **Psalms 94:15** until righteousness returns to judgment, and all the upright in heart hold to it. Pause. (Septuagint Psalm 93:15 (Psalm 94:15 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

97 **Psalms 106:3** Blessed are those who keep justice and do righteousness at all times. (Septuagint Psalm 105:3 (Psalm 106:3 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

98 **Psalms 106:31** And it was counted to him for righteousness for generation after generation, forever. (Septuagint Psalm 105:31 (Psalm 106:31 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

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99 **Psalms 111:7** The works of his hands are truth and judgment; all his commandments are faithful, (Septuagint Psalm 110:7 (Psalm 111:7 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

100 **Proverbs 1:3** also to receive the turns of words, and to understand true righteousness, and to direct judgment; **read ›**

101 **Proverbs 21:3** To do just things and to speak truth is more pleasing to God than the blood of sacrifices. **read ›**

102 **Song of Solomon 3:5** I have charged you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the powers and by the strengths of the field, that you not stir up or awaken love until it pleases. **read ›**

103 **Isaiah 5:24** Therefore, as stubble shall be burned by a coal of fire and be consumed by a flame let loose, their root shall be like chaff, and their blossom shall go up like dust; for they did not desire the law of the Lord of hosts, but provoked the oracle of the Holy One of Israel. **read ›**

104 **Isaiah 7:21** And it shall be in that day that a man shall rear a young cow and two sheep; **read ›**

105 **Isaiah 26:7** The way of the godly has been made straight, and the way of the godly is prepared. **read ›**

106 **Jeremiah 7:11** Is my house, which is called by my name, a den of robbers there before you? And behold, I have seen it, says the Lord. **read ›**

107 **Jeremiah 7:12** For go to my place which was in Shiloh, where I made my name dwell at first, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of my people Israel. **read ›**

108 **Jeremiah 9:9** Shall I not visit for these things? says the Lord. Or shall not my soul take vengeance on such a people as this? (Septuagint Jeremiah 9:8 (Jeremiah 9:9 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

109 **Jeremiah 10:7** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

110 **Jeremiah 18:9** And at another time I may speak concerning a nation and a kingdom, to rebuild it and to plant it; **read ›**

111 **Jeremiah 31:2** Thus said the Lord: I found him warm in the wilderness with those who had perished by the sword. Go, and do not destroy Israel. (Septuagint Jeremiah 38:2 (Jeremiah 31:2 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

112 **Jeremiah 35:7** and you shall on no account build houses, and you shall on no account sow seed, and you shall have no vineyard; for you shall dwell in tents all your days, so that you may live many days on the land on which you are staying.' (Septuagint Jeremiah 42:7 (Jeremiah 35:7 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

113 **Jeremiah 36:6** So you shall read from this scroll in the ears of the people in the house of the Lord, on a day of fasting; and you shall read to them in the ears of all Judah who come from their cities. (Septuagint Jeremiah 43:6 (Jeremiah 36:6 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

114 **Jeremiah 49:6** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

115 **Ezekiel 8:3** And he stretched out the likeness of a hand and took me up by the crown of my head; and the Spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven and brought me to Jerusalem in a vision of God, to the entrance of the gate that faces north, where the pillar of the purchaser was. **read ›**

116 **Ezekiel 18:9** and has walked in my statutes and kept my ordinances, to do them—he is righteous; he shall surely live, says the Lord. **read ›**

117 **Ezekiel 27:6** From the land of Bashan they made your oars; your holy things they made of ivory, shady houses from the islands of Kittim. **read ›**

118 **Ezekiel 29:14** and I will turn back the captivity of the Egyptians, and I will settle them in the land of Pathros, in the land from which they were taken; and it shall be a lowly kingdom, **read ›**

119 **Daniel 1:7** And the chief eunuch gave them names: to Daniel, Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego. **read ›**

120 **Daniel 11:5** And the king of the south shall grow strong; and one of their rulers shall grow strong against him and shall rule with great dominion. **read ›**

121 **Daniel 12:5** And I, Daniel, looked, and behold, two others were standing, one on this side of the bank of the river and one on that side of the bank of the river. **read ›**

122 **Amos 1:1** The words of Amos, which came in Accarim in Tekoa, which he saw concerning Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah king of Judah and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake. **read ›**

123 **Amos 1:15** and its kings shall go into captivity, their priests and their rulers together, says the Lord. **read ›**

124 **Amos 5:5** But do not seek Bethel, and do not go into Gilgal, and do not cross over to the Well of the Oath; for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, and Bethel shall be as though it were not. **read ›**

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125 **Amos 6:10** and the rest shall be left behind; and their relatives shall take them, and shall press hard to carry their bones out of the house; and one shall say to those in charge of the house, “Is there still anyone with you?” And he shall say, “No one else.” And he shall say, “Be silent, so as not to name the name of the Lord.” **read ›**

126 **Amos 8:7** The Lord swears by the pride of Jacob: None of your works shall ever be forgotten. **read ›**

127 **Zephaniah 3:5** But the Lord is righteous in her midst, and he will certainly not do what is unrighteous; morning by morning he will bring his judgment to light, and it is not hidden; and he does not know unrighteousness in what he demands, nor unrighteousness in a dispute. **read ›**

128 **1 Esdras 1:23** And the works of Josiah were upright before his Lord, with a heart full of godliness. **read ›**

129 **1 Esdras 8:94** as has been decided by you and by all who obey the law of the Lord. **read ›**

130 **Tobit 3:2** “You are righteous, O Lord, and all your works and all your ways are mercies and truth, and you judge with true and righteous judgment forever. **read ›**

131 **Tobit 12:8** Prayer is good with fasting and alms and righteousness. A little with righteousness is better than much with unrighteousness. It is better to give alms than to lay up gold. **read ›**

132 **Tobit 14:9** But you, keep the law and the statutes, and be merciful and just, that it may go well with you. **read ›**

133 **Wisdom of Solomon 1:1** Love righteousness, you who judge the earth; think of the Lord in goodness, and seek him in sincerity of heart. **read ›**

134 **Wisdom of Solomon 1:15** For righteousness is immortal. **read ›**

135 **Wisdom of Solomon 5:5** How has he been counted among the sons of God, and how is his lot among the holy ones? **read ›**

136 **Wisdom of Solomon 6:10** For those who keep holy things in holiness will be made holy, and those who have been taught them will find a defense. **read ›**

137 **Wisdom of Solomon 8:7** And if anyone loves righteousness, her labors are virtues; for she teaches self-control and sound judgment, righteousness and courage, and nothing in life is more useful for men than these. **read ›**

138 **Wisdom of Solomon 12:15** But being righteous, you govern all things righteously, deeming it foreign to your power to condemn one who does not deserve to be punished. **read ›**

139 **Wisdom of Solomon 14:7** For blessed is the wood through which righteousness comes. **read ›**

140 **Wisdom of Solomon 18:9** For the holy children of good men offered sacrifice in secret, and in full agreement they established the divine law, that the holy ones would share alike in the same good things and dangers, the fathers already leading the songs of praise. **read ›**

141 **Wisdom of Sirach 7:2** Keep away from what is unrighteous, and it will turn away from you. **read ›**

142 **Wisdom of Sirach 15:15** If you are willing, you will keep the commandments, and to act faithfully is of your own good will. **read ›**

143 **Wisdom of Sirach 18:2** The Lord alone will be justified. **read ›**

144 **Wisdom of Sirach 32:1** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

145 **Wisdom of Sirach 32:3** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

146 **Wisdom of Sirach 32:5** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

147 **Wisdom of Sirach 35:16** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

148 **Wisdom of Sirach 35:23** In every work trust your own soul, for this too is the keeping of the commandments. **read ›**

149 **Wisdom of Sirach 42:2** of the law of the Most High and of the covenant, and of judgment, to justify the ungodly; **read ›**

150 **Baruch 4:1** This is the book of the statutes of God and the law that endures forever. All who hold fast to her will come to life, but those who forsake her will die. **read ›**

151 **Baruch 5:2** Put on the double cloak of the righteousness that comes from God; set on your head the miter of the glory of the Everlasting. **read ›**

152 **1 Maccabees 2:52** Was not Abraham found faithful in trial, and it was counted to him for righteousness? **read ›**

153 **3 Maccabees 3:5** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

154 **4 Maccabees 5:24** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

155 **4 Maccabees 7:21** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

156 **1 Enoch 39:7** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

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157 **1 Enoch 47:4** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
158 **1 Enoch 50:4** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
159 **1 Enoch 61:4** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
160 **1 Enoch 62:15** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
161 **1 Enoch 82:4** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
162 **1 Enoch 91:12** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
163 **1 Enoch 91:14** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
164 **1 Enoch 92:3** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
165 **1 Enoch 94:4** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
166 **Matthew 3:5** Then people from Jerusalem, all of Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him. **read ›**
167 **Acts 5:16** The multitude from the surrounding cities also gathered in Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those troubled by unclean spirits, and they were all healed. **read ›**
168 **Acts 5:23** “We found the prison shut and locked, and the guards standing before the doors, but when we opened them, we found no one inside!” **read ›**
169 **Acts 26:7** which our twelve tribes, earnestly serving night and day, hope to attain. Concerning this hope I am accused by the Jews, King Agrippa! **read ›**
170 **Romans 1:17** For in it God’s righteousness is revealed from faithfulness to faithfulness. As it is written: But the righteous will live by faithfulness. **read ›**
171 **Romans 3:5** But if our unrighteousness commends the righteousness of God, what will we say? Is God unrighteous who inflicts wrath? I speak like men do. **read ›**
172 **Romans 3:21** But now apart from the law, a righteousness of God has been revealed, being attested by the law and the prophets; **read ›**
173 **Romans 3:24** being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, **read ›**
174 **Romans 3:26** in God’s forbearance; to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so that he is just and justifies the one on the basis of Jesus’ faithfulness. **read ›**
175 **Romans 3:28** We maintain therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. **read ›**
176 **Romans 3:30** since indeed there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. **read ›**
177 **Romans 4:3** For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.” **read ›**
178 **Romans 4:5** But to him who does not work, but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness. **read ›**
179 **Romans 4:6** Even as David also pronounces blessing on the man to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: **read ›**
180 **Romans 4:8** Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will certainly not count sin.” **read ›**
181 **Romans 4:22** Therefore it was also counted to him for righteousness. **read ›**
182 **Romans 10:5** For Moses writes of the righteousness that is from the law, “The man who does them shall live in them.” **read ›**
183 **1 Corinthians 4:1** Let a man regard us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God’s mysteries. **read ›**
184 **1 Corinthians 5:2** And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, so that the one who did this deed might be removed from among you. **read ›**
185 **Galatians 2:16** yet knowing that a man is not justified by works of the law but through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, even we believed in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by the faithfulness of Christ and not by works of the law, because no flesh will be justified by works of the law. **read ›**
186 **Galatians 3:6** So it was with Abraham: he believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. **read ›**
187 **Galatians 3:11** Now it is evident that no one is justified by the law before God, for the righteous will live by faithfulness. **read ›**
188 **1 Timothy 2:10** but with good works, which is appropriate for women professing godliness. **read ›**
189 **1 Timothy 4:8** For bodily exercise has some value, but godliness has value in all things, having the promise of the life which is now and of that which is to come. **read ›**

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190 **1 Timothy 4:15** Be diligent in these things. Give yourself wholly to them, that your progress may be revealed to all. **read ›**

191 **1 Timothy 6:11** But you, O man of God, flee these things; pursue righteousness, godliness, faithfulness, love, endurance, meekness. **read ›**

192 **Titus 2:7** In all things show yourself an example of good works. In your teaching, show integrity, seriousness, incorruptibility, **read ›**

193 **Titus 2:10** not stealing, but showing good faithfulness in every way, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior. **read ›**

194 **Titus 2:12** training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live soberly, righteously, and in godliness in this present age, **read ›**

195 **1 Peter 1:15** but just as he who called you is holy, you yourselves also be holy in all of your behavior, **read ›**

196 **2 Peter 1:6** and in knowledge, self-control; and in self-control, perseverance; and in perseverance, godliness; **read ›**

197 **2 Peter 1:7** and in godliness, brotherly affection; and in brotherly affection, love. **read ›**

198 **1 John 3:7** Little children, let no one lead you astray. He who practices righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. **read ›**

199 **1 John 5:3** For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not burdensome. **read ›**

200 **Revelation 22:14** Blessed are those who do his commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city. **read ›**

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Partly machine-linked: related to the passages, not always quoted in them. Each reference links to the verse in our audio Bible.

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Exodus 20:7 · 23:14

Numbers 14:28

Deuteronomy 5:31

1 Kings 11:31

Job 1:21

Psalms 33:9 · 44:21 · 50:16 · 50:18 · 72:1 · 123:1 · 133:1

Proverbs 8:13 · 9:10 · 19:17 · 22:6 · 30:19 · 31:8 · 31:20

Ecclesiastes 12:13

Isaiah 1:15 · 1:17 · 2:2 · 47:15 · 65:1

Jeremiah 2:13 · 6:16

Lamentations 4:20

Ezekiel 16:54

Daniel 6:16

Zechariah 6:12

Matthew 5:3 · 5:8 · 5:9 · 5:17 · 5:19 · 5:32 · 5:42 · 6:9 · 6:25 · 7:9 · 7:12 · 7:15 · 7:24 · 8:4 · 8:10 · 10:10 · 10:28 · 10:32 · 12:33 · 13:35 · 15:13 · 16:18 · 16:19 · 18:23 · 19:12 · 22:29 · 22:37 · 23:27 · 25:25 · 25:35

Mark 1:24 · 2:10 · 2:19 · 7:35 · 12:41

Luke 1:79 · 2:29 · 4:34 · 6:30 · 10:27 · 10:30 · 14:33 · 17:7

John 1:2 · 1:4 · 1:12 · 1:14 · 1:16 · 1:21 · 2:3 · 3:2 · 3:7 · 4:4 · 4:9 · 4:14 · 4:18 · 4:24 · 7:18 · 8:12 · 8:44 · 10:30 · 11:51 · 12:47 · 13:30 · 13:35 · 14:6 · 14:15 · 19:9 · 19:19 · 20:22 · 20:28 · 21:19

Acts 3:19 · 4:32 · 13:15 · 13:48 · 17:30 · 20:24

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Romans 1:16 · 1:18 · 1:21 · 1:26 · 1:32 · 2:2 · 2:12 · 2:14 · 2:15 · 2:16 · 2:21 · 2:24 · 2:28 · 2:29 · 3:3 · 3:19 · 3:20 · 3:23 · 3:25 · 4:11 · 5:1 · 5:6 · 5:18 · 5:20 · 5:21 · 6:3 · 6:5 · 6:6 · 6:22 · 7:4 · 7:7 · 7:8 · 7:13 · 7:14 · 7:23 · 8:3 · 8:5 · 8:10 · 8:11 · 8:17 · 8:29 · 9:5 · 9:12 · 10:2 · 10:17 · 11:33 · 11:34 · 12:1 · 12:3 · 12:9 · 12:10 · 12:12 · 12:13 · 12:16 · 12:17 · 12:18 · 12:19 · 13:9 · 13:12 · 15:27 · 16:17 · 16:18

1 Corinthians 1:19 · 1:20 · 1:30 · 2:7 · 2:9 · 3:19 · 6:7 · 7:18 · 7:25 · 7:35 · 9:9 · 9:22 · 9:23 · 10:4 · 13:4 · 13:12 · 14:13 · 14:32 · 15:32 · 15:50 · 15:55 · 15:56 · 16:13

2 Corinthians 3:6 · 3:7 · 3:18 · 5:21 · 6:5 · 6:14 · 10:5 · 11:27 · 12:9 · 13:3

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Philippians 2:3 · 3:11 · 3:15 · 3:18 · 3:20 · 4:8

Colossians 1:15 · 1:21 · 2:4 · 2:12 · 3:1 · 3:22 · 4:1

1 Thessalonians 5:12 · 5:17 · 5:18 · 5:23

2 Thessalonians 2:8

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2 Peter 3:16

1 John 2:3 · 3:2 · 3:15 · 4:4 · 4:8 · 4:10 · 4:18 · 5:7

Jude 1:11

Revelation 3:21 · 19:11 · 19:12 · 19:13 · 19:14 · 22:18

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Searched: Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes 1–9 and the Bible, including the Septuagint.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

A THF member asked “What did the early Christians believe about righteousness?” on May 22, 2026. The Historic Faith answered it as a public study on November 9, 2026.

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