

# Open the Gates

By Steve Pruitt

*Open for me the gates where the righteous enter, and I will go in and thank the LORD. Those gates lead to the presence of the LORD, and the godly enter there.*

Psalm 118:19-20 NLT

According to the Psalmist the only way to get into the presence of the Lord is by going through the gates of righteousness. And only the righteous are allowed entrance through those gates. That leaves us with a grave dilemma. Why?

The prophet Isaiah wrote, *But we are all like an unclean thing and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; we all fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.* (Isaiah 64:6) The apostle Paul quotes King David in Romans 3:10 saying, *There is none righteous, no, not one.* And also in Romans 3:12, *There is none who does good, no, not one.*

Have you ever thought about what the filthy rags looked like spoken of by Isaiah? My best guess is that he was alluding to the rags of a leper; cankered with puss, blood and rotten flesh. If that is what our righteousnesses looks like what hope have we of ever being able to walk through the gates of righteousness to worship and fellowship with a righteous God? The only righteousness that can stand before God is God's righteousness. Therefore, we must become God's righteousness if we desire to come into his presence.

The apostle Paul wrote, *For he made him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him.* (2 Corinthians 5:21) Isaiah prophesied this, *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement for our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.* (Isaiah 53:5-6) The "him" referred to in this scripture verse is Jesus; God's only son.

The only way to enter the gates of righteousness is by the blood of Jesus. The only way to get to God is through his Son. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through the blood of his precious sacrifice. And it is through and by the blood of Jesus that we have any hope of coming before God to worship him. 1 Peter 3:18 says, *For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit...*

Have you become the righteousness of God through the blood of Jesus Christ? Are you seeking daily to walk in righteousness? Ask the Father to give you grace to walk out your salvation with fear and trembling.

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**Scriptures for meditation:**

- John 14:6
- Hebrews 10:19
- Psalm 118:22-24