

Romans 3.21-31

“Finally, Some Good News!”

Sometime in FUTURE – I pray NEAR Future – Some Team of SCIENTISTS –

Maybe from some Research UNIVERSITY put STOP to COVID-19

Global Fears LIFTED! > Pharmaceutical Companies will Get MORE RICH

NOBEL Prizes will be Given – History Books Rewritten

Major Blvds in Cities all Around World will be RENAMED

Best of All > LIVES will be SAVED! People in Every Nation will LIVE!

Appreciation will be DESERVED- More HALF of People on Earth may GET V.

Maybe 4% of INFECTED will DIE – Percent Higher OLD or on CRUISE Ship!

Pray for COVID-19 to be Treatable like Polio, Measles, HIV, and Seasonal FLU

Have you MISSED Obvious Fact – Many People CONVIENTLY Ignore It

We DON'T Need Covid-19 to DIE! Death has More Impressive Stats than CV19

100% ALL Humanity WILL DIE – BIBLE says Death NOT END > Judgment

Romans 1-3 100% of Humanity Not Ready for Judgment > NO Vaccination

Any HONEST Heart would agree with the Confession of this RUSSIAN Poet

“I do not know what the heart of a bad man is like, but I do know what the heart
of a good man is like, and it is terrible” Ivan Turgenev

Our Text begins w/ 2 VERY HOPEFUL WORDS – Romans 3.21 BUT NOW

v. 21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested

MONTH Ago: For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed Romans 1.17

Month of SUNDAYS > Study 64 Vss > NO ONE Righteous – NO NOT ONE!

AFTER LONG DARK NIGHT – SUN has RISEN – DAY of GRACE Dawned

“NOW” – word FILLED WITH MEANING – From the Context of Romans

NOW we know w/out X – All Desperately LOST, ABSOLUTELY HOPELESS

3.21 BUT NOW a righteousness from God...has been made known

NOW at this Time in God's History of Redemption

"Day of the Lord" > Covenant Fulfilled > Salvation Accomplished

NOW is the Advance of the Gospel to All Nations

NOW We have the OPPORTUNITY to Hear & Believe the Gospel of Jesus

1 Righteous Man Walked this Earth – Died, Terribly – Rose – FOREVER Alive

Only this MAN who Conquered Death > Can Offer CURE for Death's Virus

He was Righteous in LIFE & DEATH > Inexhaustible Treasury of Righteousness

Vaccination from Hell > Those RECEIVE His Mercy will Forever PRAISE Him

Our Text is MAJOR TURNING POINT in this Letter to ROMANS

Look from Romans 3 BACKWARD to ch 1 > See the FLAMES of HELL

Look from Romans 3 FORWARD to ch 8 > See FOUNDATION of HEAVEN

From WRATH to RIGHTEOUSNESS

From CONDEMNATION to JUSTIFICATION

From BONDAGE to FREEDOM

vs. 21-26 Six Tightly Packed Vss / "center and heart of the letter"

MOST Important PARAGRAPH in Most Studied Book in All Literature

"possibly the most important single paragraph ever written" Leon Morris

"We have come to the deepest part of the diamond mine with the hardest soil to dig through, but it also has the most diamonds, and the largest!" JD Crowley

IMPORTANT – but NOT EASIEST Paragraph – Packed and COMPLEX

1. Good News Proclaimed (2. Good News Practiced)

a. Planned by God

vs. 23,24 For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift

EARN

“by his grace as a gift” = Nothing in us to Merit > We’re Unworthy of Salvation

1st MOVE in PLAN OF SALVATION – God the Father / before Creation

Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. Romans 4.13

Do NOT Think of GOD as STINGY GIVER – Pull Fingers Apart to Open Hand

Martin LUTHER quoted John 3.16 3 X’s on his DEATHBED

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son...” John 3.16

God LOVES, God GIVES/ God LOVES, God GIVES/ God LOVES, God GIVES

Plan Not DIVINE AFTER That v. 21 the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it

The Law and the Prophets Bear Witness to this Righteousness

LAW demands Blood Sacrifice > Our Righteousness will Never be Enough

“...every knee . . . every tongue...will say of me, ‘In the Lord alone are righteousness and strength.’” Isaiah 45.23,24

gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures Romans 1.1,2

b. Provided by Christ Greatest Display of Righteousness Life of Jesus

Jesus was RIGHTEOUSLY OBEDIENT to Fulfill His Father’s Initiative

“For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me.” John 6.38

“Grace is God loving, God stooping, God coming to the rescue, God giving himself generously in and through Jesus Christ.” John Stott

Focus on 3 IMPORTANT THEOLOGICAL TRUTHS in this PARAGRAPH

Justification – Redemption – Propitiation > from the Cross of X

1) Justification

1st time in Letter > Righteousness from God Identified with JUSTIFICATION

Same Gk ROOT Word Righteousness/Justification // Justif. Makes Us Righteous

MAIN Word (noun/verb) to Describe our Relationship w/ God > + 100 X's

JUSTIFICATION >> WORD – comes from Roman LAW COURTS

v. 24 justified by his grace as a gift

v. 26 he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus

v. 28 we hold that one is justified by faith

“Justification is the main hinge on which salvation turns” John Calvin

“When the article of justification has fallen, everything has fallen...This is the chief article from which all other doctrines have flowed...It alone begets, nourishes, builds, preserves, and defends the church of God; and without it the church of God cannot exist for one hour.” Martin Luther

Some of U getting HIGH Level Degrees on Things that Most Never Understand

But some of U Not Interested in Learning IMPORTANT Theological Words

IF one U Loved got Virus/Cancer – Dr. told U Diagnosis – Look Up Big Words

Someone We Love DIED for Us – Wants HEARTS and HEADS

God calls U to Read Word > Think His THOUGHTS AFTER HIM!

Lockdown > Families read Westminster Shorter Catechism basic DOCTRINES

JUSTIFICATION is an ACT – Not PROCESS – God DECLARES us Justified

WORD – comes from LAW COURTS – familiar to those under Roman Law

Opposite = Condemnation – Both Spoken by Judge – ULTIMATE VERDICTS

Movie “Gladiator” – Caesar could give either Thumbs Up or Thumbs Down

God SEES Cross as FULL Payment for Sin > Resurrection Father's Thumbs UP

MORE THAN PARDON: Pardon is **NEGATIVE** – Removal of Penalty or Debt
 Justification is **POSITIVE** – Receive Righteous Status / Restored Relationships

Pardon says “You may go” / Justification says “You may come”

Pardon removes Punishment / Justif. means No Ground for Punishment Exists

v. 21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested *apart from the law*
 God **NEVER** intended **LAW** Keeping to **BE** a **WAY** of **SALVATION**

1. We can**NOT** Keep Law – Even Nation w/ God in Midst could **NOT** Keep

2. Relationship **GOD** wants w/ Children based on **LOVE** – **NOT** Law!

“freely” = **WITHOUT A CAUSE** / Nothing in us to Merit Salvation > **GRACE**

ALL OTHER Religions “**DO**” – Ceremony, Study, Pilgrimage, Prayers, Payment

ONLY Jesus says “**DONE**” – Only **HE** has Finished Work of **SALVATION**

we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ
 Romans 5.1

2) **Redemption** – Commercial Term, Borrowed from the Marketplace

v 24 justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

REDEMPTION word used **MORE** in **OT** than in **NT**

OT – used in setting Slaves Free > Israel redeemed from Egypt, Babylon

“this is what the **LORD** says-- he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.”
 Isaiah 43.1

THIS WAS HOW JESUS DEFINED HIS MISSION

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Mark 10.45 **RANSOM** > **REDEMPTION'S PRICE**

BECAUSE JESUS PAID THE PRICE OF OUR SIN > We Belong to Him

“There is a Redeemer, Jesus God’s Own Son” Keith Green

3) Propitiation - Religious Term, Borrowed from the Temples

vs. 24,25 justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood

Wd PROPITIATION occurs 4 X's NT: Several English Transl NEVER Appears

In fact – unless you are using KJV or ESV – will not see term “Propitiation”

RSV – “Expiate” or “expiation” / NIV “sacrifice of atonement”

Some Versions of NIV Note “turn aside his wrath” – Meaning of Propitiation

REASON WHY – term is Unpopular with Some > WRATH of God

THIS IS THE PROBLEM – for some idea more HEATHEN than Christian

Some Believers are Embarrassed, Even Shocked, This Word is applied to God

“Expiate” – means Cover over Sin – a more comfortable thought

“Propitiate” – turn away God's wrath, protect from God's wrath

BUT as we've Seen we NEED NOTHING LESS than being SAVED from Wrath

“The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men” Romans 1.18

“you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath” Romans 2.5

“God is...bringing his wrath on us” Romans 3.5

WE NEED NOTHING LESS THAN A FULL REMOVAL of His WRATH

We have seen – God's Wrath is PERFECT, PERSONAL, and PUNITIVE

PERFECT – He punishes sinners with clean hands, He remains holy and just

PERSONAL – God is grieved by sin, it's a slap in His face, He responds in wrath

PUNITIVE – just penalty for our sins and offenses

vs. 25,26 Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
Romans 5.8

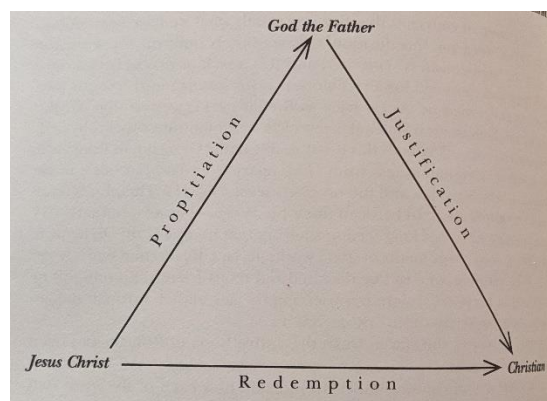
“In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”
1 John 4.10

“It would be hard to exaggerate the differences between the pagan and the Christian views of propitiation. In the pagan perspective, human beings try to placate their bad-tempered deities with their own paltry offerings. According to the Christian revelation, God’s own great love, propitiated, his own holy wrath through the gift of his own dear Son, who took our place, bore our sin and died our death. Thus, God himself gave himself to save us from himself.” John Stott

CROSS accomplished our Justification, Redemption, and Propitiation
AND the Cross Demonstrated God’s Just Nature

Prophet Zechariah LOOKED Forward to a GREAT Day

Behold, I will bring my servant the Branch... and I will remove the iniquity of this land in a single day. In that day, declares the Lord of hosts, every one of you will invite his neighbor to come under his vine and under his fig tree.” Zechariah 3.8-10



In Christ we are JUSTIFIED / Through His Blood we are Redeemed /
He has Propitiated His Righteous Wrath

If salvation is by human works, then human works (or a lack of them) can undo it. If I can save myself, I can unsave myself. I can ruin everything. But if salvation is of God from beginning to end, it is sure and unwaveringly simple because God is himself sure and unwavering.
James Boice

c. Procured by Faith

What Price must we Pay for this Gift of Salvation? What Sacrifice Give?

THAT'S THE VERY REASON THE REDEEMED SAINTS WORSHIP
WE COULD NEVER PAY THE PRICE – Grace Freely Given by FAITH

1st 70 vss Romans wd 'Faith' 3 X's > Next 36 vss word 'Faith' 26 X's

v. 22 righteousness from God comes thru faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe

v. 25 propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith

v. 26 the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus

v. 28 For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

SIMPLE Definition: Faith > Forsaking All I Trust Him

Whenever they GET this Covid-19 Figured Out there will be Anti-Vaccinators

Some will say RISK of VACCINE is worse than Any VIRUS!

Don't HAVE to Take Vaccine – Will be RISKS – Vaccine Might STOP VIRUS

Many RISKS to Follow Jesus – Lose your Life as you Know It – DIE to SELF

But He ALONE offers ETERNAL Life and Hope to the DYING

What Can Wash away Our Sin? NOTHING but the BLOOD of Jesus!

FAITH is not a WORK > Faith has NO MERIT before God

FAITH OF ITSELF IS EMPTY – Issue: Who or What is your faith in?

Man was interviewed for church membership by the Church Board

“What do you believe about salvation?” “I believe what the church believes”

“But what does the church believe?” “The church believes what I believe”

“But just WHAT do you and the church believe?!” “The SAME THING”

FAITH is only as GOOD as its OBJECT > Our Faith is IN the Lord Jesus Christ

“Faith apprehends nothing else but that precious jewel Christ Jesus” Martin Luther

“Christianity is distinguished categorically from every other human religion. All religions...teach a human way to achieve eternity, a man-made ladder to the bliss of the life to come. Only Christianity humbles man by insisting that there is nothing at all we can do to work out our salvation.” James Boice

Frank Sinatra sang the theme song for every other religion “I Did it My Way”

Other religions are about being saved through giving to God a righteousness. Christianity is about being saved through receiving from God a righteousness.
Tim Keller

2. Good News Practiced

v. 27-31 Paul DEFENDS the Gospel against JEWISH CRITICS

ASKS & ANSWERS 3 Anticipated Questions > Applies the Gospel

What should believers in this gospel look like?

a. What about Me? > Post-Moderns INSTAGRAM their 3 Meals a Day

1st Question: vs. 27,28 Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

Paul EXEMPLIFIED Jewish Boasting: Brags of his Hebrew Pedigree – Philipp 3

Saul of Tarsus – One of BEST LAW KEEPERS of any PHARISEE

I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord
Philippians 3.8

v. 22 There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

PRIDE AFLICTS – Jew and Gentile > Language of our Fallen Self-Centeredness

EITHER YOU GIVE GOD GLORY / OR CLAIM IT FOR YOURSELF

FOOLISH BOASTING: Drowning Swimmer Boasted when Saved by Lifeguard

All swimmer did was lie still and be dragged to safety

“The harlot, the liar, the murderer, are all short of God’s glory; but so are you. Perhaps they stand at the bottom of a mine, and you are on the crest of an Alp; but you are as little able to touch the stars as they”
Handley Moule

b. What about Others?

Question 2 About Privileges - vs. 29,30 “Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.”

JEWS were very proud of their Privileges

3.1 “What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew...Much in every way! First of all, they have been entrusted with the very words of God.”

LAW given to the Jews – GOSPEL given to all people

PROMISE TO ABRAHAM - Paul will Quote in Ch 4

“all peoples on earth will be blessed through you” Genesis 12.3

PREACHING OF JESUS “this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations” Matthew 24.14

GROUND at the FOOT of the CROSS IS LEVEL – No Privileged Positions

“Someone was once speaking to a rich English lady, stressing that every human being is a sinner. She replied with astonishment, “But ladies are not sinners!” “Then who are?” the person asked her. “Just young men in their foolish days,” was her reply. Then the person further explained the gospel, insisting that if she was to be saved, she would have to be saved exactly like the footman of her coach – by the unmerited grace of God in Christ’s atonement – she retorted, “Well then, I will not be saved!” William Paton Mackay

NOTICE – 2 Questions of GOSPEL APPLICATION echo Teaching of JESUS

2 Great DUTIES: LOVE God with whole SELF – Love NEIGHBOR as SELF

c. How do I Live While I Am Waiting for Heaven?

vs. 31 “Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.”

CONCERN: People KNOW they’re Going to Heaven, won’t they live like Hell?

Became FUNDAMENTAL DEBATE OF REFORMATION

Paul will spend Several Chapters – Answering: By No Means!

Those who are FORGIVEN of their SINS are also FILLED with the SPIRIT

WILLIAM COWPER had Miserable Childhood – 6 yrs old Mother DIED

Sent to Orphanage – Small & Sensitive Boy – Badgered, Bullied, & Beaten

Early Years filled w/ TERRORS & FEARS – Mind Failed / 2 Suicide Attempts

Cowper cried through many dark nights of the soul - “My sin! My sin! Oh for some fountain open for my cleansing!” BUT THERE WAS NO FOUNTAIN

1756 – 25 year old William Cowper committed to Asylum run by Dr. Cotton

At that time in England – Most Asylums were known for Terrible Treatment

Dr. Cotton – WONDERFUL EXCEPTION – gracious, kind, Christian gentleman

Led Cowper to Lord Jesus – Our Justification, Our Redeemer, Our Propitiation

“The happy period which was to shake off my fetters and afford me a clear opening to the free mercy of God in Christ Jesus was now arrived. I flung myself into a chair near the window, and seeing a Bible there, ventured once more to apply to it for comfort and instruction. The first verses I saw were on the third chapter of Romans: ‘Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to manifest his righteousness.’ Immediately I received strength to believe, and the full beams of the Sun of Righteousness shone on me. I saw the sufficiency of the atonement he had made, my pardon in his blood, and the fullness and completeness of his justification. In a moment I believed and received the gospel.”

William Cowper, 1779

Then Cowper wrote his hymn of testimony –

“There is a fountain filled with blood, Drawn from Immanuel’s veins;

And sinners, plunged beneath that flood, Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see That fountain in his day;
and there have I, as vile as he, Washed all my sins away.

E'er since by faith I saw the stream, Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme, And shall be till I die.

This MEANS you can be SAVED NOW – RIGHT NOW!

We are NOT Waiting to ATTAIN Some FAVOR with God in FUTURE

We are NOT Trying to Accumulate FUTURE Merit by GOOD WORKS

We are RECEIVING what is ALREADY Done by WORK of Jesus Christ

It is only in Christianity that FUTURE has Already become PRESENT

Come, ye weary, heavy laden,
Bruised and broken by the Fall;
If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all:
Not the righteous, not the righteous,
Sinners Jesus came to call.

Let not your conscience make you linger;
Nor of fitness fondly dream;
All the fitness he requires
Is to feel your need of him:
This he gives you, this he gives you;
'Tis the Spirit's rising beam. Joseph Hart

Romans 3.²¹But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—²²the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

²⁷Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. ²⁹Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, ³⁰since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. ³¹Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.