

Romans 3:21-31

- The doctrine of Grace - Chapters 1-8
 - All have sinned - Chapters 1-3
 - Saved by faith alone - Chapters 4-5
 - Victory over sin - Chapters 6-8
- Benefits...
 - Having established God is NOT partial - He will JUDGE everyone [Jew and Gentile]
 - And that it does NOT matter what LABEL we give to ourselves [what religion]
 - Is there any PROFIT in then to going to CHURCH [religion]
 - The answer is YES - there are a MANY [πολύς] advantages to being in CHURCH [religious]
 - FIRST and foremost - because we get to hear the ORACLES of God [the Bible]
- Excuses...
 - Paul anticipated EXCUSES people would have to NOT go to CHURCH...
 - ALL seeking to pass the BLAME onto God – as if somehow our failures are His fault...
 - But unless we ADMIT we are the PROBLEM – then we are NOT ready for the SOLUTION...
 - EVERYONE is a sinner – both the RELIGIOUS [Jews] and NON religious [gentiles]
 - There are NONE that are good – NOT even one – **Psalm 14:1**
 - The throats of ALL men are like an open TOMB [their badness is coming out] - **Psalm 5:9**
 - They RUN to EVIL - because their THOUGHTS are EVIL – and they have NO peace - **Isaiah 59:7-8**
 - Because they have NO fear of God - for they flatter themselves – **Psalm 36:1**
- The Purpose...
 - We KNOW [εἶδω] that what the LAW [ὁ νόμος] says [present]
 - It says so every mouth will be SHUT - and the whole world will be GUILTY before God...
 - For NO flesh [Jew or Gentile] can be JUSTIFIED in the eyes of God [just as if we never sinned]
 - The purpose of the LAW is so we can KNOW [ἐπίγνωσις] we are SINNERS!
- **1ST – SAVED BY GRACE ... vs. 21-26**
 - 1st - Apart from the Law... vs. 21
 - But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed!
 - Having established God is NOT partial - He will JUDGE everyone [Jew and Gentile]
 - That it does NOT matter what LABEL we give to ourselves [what religion]
 - And the ONLY purpose of the LAW is to establish that we are SINNERS – **Romans 3:20**
 - NOW – we are ready to SEE the ANSWER...
 - Being RIGHT with God [righteous] is REVEALED [passive] apart from the LAW [νόμος]!
 - Most people have it set in their minds – they are good because of what they do...
 - If they cheat - lie - steal – and hurt others – then they are a BAD person...
 - If they go to church - help those in need - are kind to strangers – they are GOOD!
 - But trying to be right with God [righteous] - by keeping RULES [νόμος] does NOT work...
 - We might keep most of the LAW [613 commands] - most of the time...
 - But the moment we break just ONE – we are NOT righteous - **James 2:10**
 - NO matter how hard we try – we CANNOT be right with God by keeping the LAW...

- So there has to be another way to heaven – APART from our own efforts!
- 2nd - Witnesses... vs. 21
 - Old Covenant...
 - Being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets!
 - The LAW [τοῦ νόμου] and the PROPHETS – together making up the Old Testament...
 - Anticipated [μαρτυρέω] our inability to meet the STANDARD...
 - God gave Israel all the RULES they needed to keep – He gave them the LAW...
 - But even before Moses died he told Israel they would NOT be able to keep the LAW...
 - The Law would be a WITNESS [μαρτυρέω] against them – revealing their sinful nature!
 - **Deuteronomy 31:26-29** – “Take this Book of the Law... that it may be there as a witness against you... For I know that after my death you will become utterly corrupt and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you.”
 - The FAULT is NOT in the Law – the Law is PERFECT – **Romans 7:12**
 - The FAULT is in US - we are NOT perfect – **Romans 7:14**
 - And while the LAW has the power to show us our FAULTS – show us we are SINNERS...
 - The LAW is LIMITED – it has no POWER to make us PERFECT!
 - New Covenant...
 - Since the OLD way did NOT work – there was a need for a NEW way...
 - There was a need for a BETTER way – one that did NOT depend on us...
 - What was needed was a way to get to heaven APART from our own works...
 - NEW Covenant – where God does ALL the work for us – He makes us RIGHTEOUS!
 - **Jeremiah 31:31-33** – “The days are coming says the LORD - when I will make a new covenant... I will put My law in their minds and write it on their hearts.”
 - The NEW Covenant is NOT about what we have to DO - but what God DOES for us...
 - Only Jesus can bring LASTING change - a transformed heart and new life...
 - As we come to Jesus - we are CHANGED from the inside out!
- 3rd - By Grace... vs. 22-24
 - Through Faith... vs 22
 - Even the righteousness of God - through faith in Jesus Christ!
 - We access this NEW covenant [promise] – though FAITH [πίστις]
 - By FAITH in Jesus Christ - we are made RIGHTEOUS [δικαιοσύνη]
 - The word RIGHTEOUS - means to be RIGHT with God [without sin]!
 - **Romans 12:3** – “God has dealt to each one a measure of FAITH.”
 - Jesus said some have GREAT faith – while others have LITTLE faith - **Matthew 8:26**
 - The wording leads us to think of FAITH in terms of QUANTITY...
 - As if one person is given a LOT of faith – while another is LIMITED...
 - But Jesus rejected this idea - when the disciples asked Him to INCREASE their FAITH!
 - **Luke 17:6** – “[All we need is the] faith of mustard seed.”
 - FAITH is not about QUANTITY or QUALITY – it is about WHO we put our TRUST in...
 - We can have LOTS of FAITH – but if it is NOT placed in the right place it is useless...
 - Because if we put our FAITH in something has NO power - it CANNOT save us...
 - If we think our good WORKS can get us to heaven – we have FAITH in ourselves...
 - If we think our RELIGION can get us to heaven – we have FAITH in a men...
 - Only when we place our FAITH in Jesus [all power] – can we get to heaven!
 - For everyone... vs. 22-23

- To all and on all who believe. For there is no difference.
- For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God!
- This RIGHTEOUSNESS of God is available to [εἰς] EVERYONE [πᾶς]
- And comes UPON [ἐπὶ] ANYONE [πᾶς] who BELIEVES [has faith] in Jesus...
- Because there is NO difference – ALL [πᾶς] have SINNED [missed the mark]
- We have ALL fallen short of the STANDARD [δόξα] God gave through His LAW...
- So EVERYONE needs the salvation that ANYONE can receive – by FAITH!
- This is one of the most QUOTED verses in the entire Bible...
- But it is often MISUNDERSTOOD – it is not CONDEMNATION – it is a CHOICE...
- It is saying we are ALL sinners – but knowing that open the door to be SAVED...
- Because EVERYONE can choose to put their FAITH in Jesus Christ!
- **Romans 10:13** – “Whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.”
- The Gift of God... vs. 24
 - Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus!
 - By FAITH we are JUSTIFIED [δικαιόω] – same root word as RIGHTEOUS [δίκαιος]
 - This is our KEY word in ROMANS – the JUST live by FAITH – **Romans 1:17**
 - JUSTIFIED - just as though we had NEVER sinned...
 - FREELY [δωρεάν] – the word means to without COST [δωρεά]
 - By GRACE [χάρις] – 156x in NT – better translated as GIFT...
 - Without any COST to us – we have been given the GIFT of our REDEMPTION [ransom]!
 - We were all in DEBT - every SIN we did sank us DEEPER...
 - It was as though SIN had kidnapped us – and we were POWERLESS to get free...
 - But Jesus came and PAID our DEBT [ransom] in FULL [all of our sin]
 - To us it was FREE – but our forgiveness came at the GREATEST of all costs!
 - **Mark 10:45** – “The Son of Man [came] ...to give His life a ransom for many.”
 - We are sinners who have made countless mistakes...
 - But FAITH in Jesus is the KEY that unlocks our access to the GIFT [χάρις] of REDEMPTION...
 - So that when God looks down on us – He does NOT see our FAULTS...
 - He instead sees the perfect life of His Son Jesus – He sees us as perfect - FAULTLESS!
 - **II Corinthians 5:21** - “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”
- 4th - Justified... vs. 25-26
 - Covered... vs. 25
 - Whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood through faith!
 - God set up Jesus as a PROPITIATION for our SIN – through FAITH in His blood [cross]
 - PROPITIATION [2x in NT] – also translated as MERCY Seat – **Hebrews 9:5**
 - MERCY SEAT – from the Hebrew verb [כָּפַר] – to COVER [atonement]
 - The LID of the ARK that sat in the Holiest of All – with TWO angels on top – **Exodus 25:18**
 - Symbolic of the THRONE ROOM of God – surrounded by the CHERUBIM – **Revelation 4:8**
 - This was the place where the HIGH priest would come once a year on Yom Kippur...
 - To make ATONEMENT – COVER the sins of all Israel – **Leviticus 16:14**
 - We come to the MERCY SEAT [to the Throne Room] - to be forgiven by the Lord...
 - But our sins are NOT just COVERED – our sins are REMOVED - **Hebrews 8:12**
 - Righteous... vs. 25
 - To demonstrate His righteousness.
 - Because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed!

- God had a DILEMMA – one in which the CROSS [blood] was the ONLY solution...
- God LOVES us – He desires for us to be with Him FOREVER in Heaven – **II Peter 3:9**
- But God is RIGHTEOUS - and could NOT overlook our SIN...
- Therefore the ONLY way for God to PASS over the SINS we had committed [perfect]
- Was for Jesus to DIE for our sins [shed His blood] - to SATISFY the penalty of the LAW!
- If you have a law – but do not enforce it – then there really is no law at all...
- If I say you have to wear a HELMET – but do NOT enforce it – it is NOT required!
- If God gave us the Law and there was no penalty – the Law would be meaningless...
- Therefore someone had to pay the price [death] for our SIN – **Romans 6:23**
- By paying the price for sin on the cross – God proved [ἐνδείξις] He was RIGHTEOUS!

▪ Justifier... vs. 26

- To demonstrate at the present time His righteousness.
- That He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus!
- Therefore the cross PROVED [ἐνδείξις] TWO things...
- It demonstrated that God is JUST [δίκαιος] – He punishes SIN...
- And He also the JUSTIFIER [δικαιόω] of those who put their FAITH in Jesus!
- It is like if we took a test in school and got an F – but the best student in the class got an A...
- That student came to us and offered to swap grades and take our F – and give us their A!
- We failed the test of life - we got an [F] – Jesus got it all right - He got an [A]
- He took our SIN [F] and gave us His RIGHTEOUSNESS [A]
- The New Covenant simply says we need to ask and receive His free GIFT!

● 2ND - NO BOASTING ... vs. 27-31

○ 1st - The contrast... vs. 27-28

▪ Under the Law...

- Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works?
- Therefore [οὐν] – since we are JUSTIFIED as a GIFT from God...
- We do NOT have anything we can BOAST about – we did NOT do any of the WORK!
- The Law encourages boasting – because it is all about our works...
- People love to act HOLY – tell us how GOOD they are...
- People love to tell us how much BETTER they are compared to others [self-righteous]
- Walk into a church and see the donation plaque - or the thank you announcements!

▪ Under Faith...

- No - but by the law of faith!
- Under the law [νόμος] of FAITH there is no more boasting...
- FAITH removes bragging because we did NOT do anything – God did it ALL!
- **Ephesians 2:8-9** – “For by grace you have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God - not of works - lest anyone should boast.”
- If we bought a new CAR – we could boast in what we had PURCHASED...
- But if we are given a CAR – might boast about who gave it – but NOT in ourselves!
- Jesus did all the work to save us – we go to heaven as a FREE gift from God...
- We cannot boast how good we are – we are no good sinners – we can only boast in God!
- **Psalms 34:2** – “My soul shall make its boast in the LORD.”

▪ Apart from the Law... vs. 28

- Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law!
- Therefore – pointing back to the first THREE chapters of Romans...

- Having established God is NOT partial - He will JUDGE everyone [Jew and Gentile]
- That it does NOT matter what LABEL we give to ourselves [what religion]
- And the ONLY purpose of the LAW is to establish that we are SINNERS – **Romans 3:20**
- The ONLY conclusion we can REASONABLY [λογίζομαι] come to is...
- We are JUSTIFIED [just as if we never sinned] by means of FAITH [instrumental]
- APART [without] any of the works of the Law [no article]
- Salvation by GRACE alone - though FAITH alone - in CHRIST alone...
- There is NO other option – there is NO other way to get to heaven...
- Because if there were – then Jesus died for NO reason!
- **Galatians 2:21** – “I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.”

○ 3rd - Jew and Gentile... vs. 29-30

- Is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles?
- Yes of the Gentiles also since there is one God who will justify.
- The circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith!
- Is the Lord ONLY the God of the Jews [religious] – NOT the Gentiles [worldly]
- NO - there is only ONE God - and only ONE way to be JUSTIFIED [δικαιόω]
- CIRCUMCISION [religious] are JUSTIFIED from [ἐκ] FAITH [not the Law]
- UNCIRCUMCISED [worldly] are JUSTIFIED through [διὰ] the [τῆς] FAITH [same as the religious]
- We all have to come to the SAME God - to be saved the SAME way!
- There is NOT a God of the CATHOLICS - and different God of the BAPTISTS...
- There is only One God – and only One church – those who believe by faith in Jesus!
- **Ephesians 4:4-6** – “There is one body and one Spirit just as you were called in one hope of your calling. One Lord - one faith - one baptism - one God and Father of all.”

○ 4th - Fulfilling the Law... vs. 31

- Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not!
- On the contrary - we establish the law!
- One might argue then that through [διὰ] the [τῆς] the FAITH - the Law becomes irrelevant...
- Certainly NOT [μὴ] - on the contrary [ἀλλά] FAITH makes it possible to keep the LAW...
- The Law only has the power to CONDEMN us – it cannot make us GOOD...
- But FAITH that opens the door to GRACE – has the power to CHANGE us!
- That Law can tell us NOT to be angry - cheat - or covet what others have...
- The Law can tell us to love our enemies - be kind to those who hate us...
- But it cannot change our heart so that we can - or even want to do those things!
- It is only through the gift of GRACE - through faith in Jesus...
- God can change our DESIRES – changes our HEARTS – so we can do GOOD...

- He gives us the power of His Spirit to live a changed life – one that upholds the LAW!