

Romans Session 43

How to Be Right with God 1

Romans 3:21-25 (NASB77)

²¹ *But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,*

²² *even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;*

²³ *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

²⁴ *being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;*

²⁵ *whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;*

Paul having spent all the time he has on helping those in Rome to see that All Men are lost and need a Savior. Now moves on to talk of how to be right with God.

He wants them to know that not all is lost and that there is hope and that that hope is found in Jesus Christ. He wants them to know that that hope is available to all men.

Job asked the most important question it is possible to ask,

Job 9:2 (NASB77)

² *"In truth I know that this is so, But how can a man be in the right before God?"*

Then he went on to say,

Job 9:3-20 (NASB77)

³ *"If one wished to dispute with Him, He could not answer Him once in a thousand times.*

⁴ *"Wise in heart and mighty in strength, Who has defied Him without harm?"*

⁵ *"It is God who removes the mountains, they know not how, When He overturns them in His anger;*

⁶ *Who shakes the earth out of its place, And its pillars tremble;*

⁷ *Who commands the sun not to shine, And sets a seal upon the stars;*

⁸ *Who alone stretches out the heavens, And tramples down the waves of the sea;*

⁹ *Who makes the Bear, Orion, and the Pleiades, And the chambers of the south;*

¹⁰ *Who does great things, unfathomable, And wondrous works without number.*

¹¹ *"Were He to pass by me, I would not see Him; Were He to move past me, I would not perceive Him.*

¹² *"Were He to snatch away, who could restrain Him? Who could say to Him, 'What art Thou doing?'"*

¹³ *"God will not turn back His anger; Beneath Him crouch the helpers of Rahab.*

¹⁴ *"How then can I answer Him, And choose my words before Him?"*

¹⁵ *"For though I were right, I could not answer; I would have to implore the mercy of my judge.*

¹⁶ *"If I called and He answered me, I could not believe that He was listening to my voice.*

¹⁷ *"For He bruises me with a tempest, And multiplies my wounds without cause.*

¹⁸ *"He will not allow me to get my breath, But saturates me with bitterness.*

¹⁹ *"If it is a matter of power, behold, He is the strong one! And if it is a matter of justice, who can summon Him?"*

²⁰ *"Though I am righteous, my mouth will condemn me; Though I am guiltless, He will declare me guilty.*

Because God is the kind of God He is, Job wondered how a person could ever hope to approach Him, much less become right and acceptable before Him.

Can a mere human being have a right relationship with a God who is perfectly holy, infinite, and mighty?

Bildad echoed Job's question, saying,

Job 25:4 (NASB77)

⁴ "How then can a man be just with God? Or how can he be clean who is born of woman?"

Upon hearing John the Baptist fearful warnings about God's judgment, the multitudes were questioning him, saying;

Luke 3:10b (NASB77)

¹⁰ "Then what shall we do?"

The crowd that Jesus had miraculously fed the day before asked Him,

John 6:27-28 (NASB77)

²⁷ "Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man shall give to you, for on Him the Father, even God, has set His seal."

²⁸ They said therefore to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"

The rich young ruler asked Jesus,

Matthew 19:16 (NASB77)

¹⁶ And behold, one came to Him and said, "Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?"

And on we go, though out history men have asked much the same questions as did Job and the others.

The very reason that religion is so universally common to mankind reflects man's attempts to answer such questions. As noted in our past studies here, people cannot escape feelings of guilt, not only for doing things they know are wrong but for being the way they are.

Man's sense of lostness, loneliness, emptiness, and meaninglessness is reflected in the literature and archeological remains of every civilization.

So also is his fear of death, of existence, if any, beyond the grave, and of divine punishment.

Nearly every religion is a response to those fears and seeks to offer a way of reaching and satisfying deity.

But every religion except Christianity is man-made and works centered, and for that reason, none of them can succeed in leading men to God.

Scripture makes clear that here is indeed a way to God, but that it is not based on anything men themselves can do to achieve or merit it.

Man can be made right with God, but not on his own terms or in his own power.

In that basic regard Christianity is distinct from every other religion.

As far a salvation is concerned, there are therefore only two religions the world has ever known or will know,

The religion of divine accomplishment which is biblical Christianity, and religion of human achievement, which includes all other kinds of religion, by whatever names they may go under.

When threatened by the fierce and powerful Babylonians, the people of Judah asked Jeremiah to intercede for them before God.

Jeremiah 42:1-22 (NASB77)

- ¹ Then all the commanders of the forces, Johanan the son of Kareah, Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiiah, and all the people both small and great approached
- ² and said to Jeremiah the prophet, "Please let our petition come before you, and pray for us to the LORD your God, that is for all this remnant; because we are left but a few out of many, as your own eyes now see us,
- ³ that the LORD your God may tell us the way in which we should walk and the thing that we should do."
- ⁴ Then Jeremiah the prophet said to them, "I have heard you. Behold, I am going to pray to the LORD your God in accordance with your words; and it will come about that the whole message which the LORD will answer you I will tell you. I will not keep back a word from you."
- ⁵ Then they said to Jeremiah, "May the LORD be a true and faithful witness against us, if we do not act in accordance with the whole message with which the LORD your God will send you to us.
- ⁶ "Whether it is pleasant or unpleasant, we will listen to the voice of the LORD our God to whom we are sending you, in order that it may go well with us when we listen to the voice of the LORD our God."
- ⁷ Now it came about at the end of ten days that the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah.
- ⁸ Then he called for Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the commanders of the forces that were with him, and for all the people both small and great,
- ⁹ and said to them, "Thus says the LORD the God of Israel, to whom you sent me to present your petition before Him:
- ¹⁰ 'If you will indeed stay in this land, then I will build you up and not tear you down, and I will plant you and not uproot you; for I shall relent concerning the calamity that I have inflicted on you.
- ¹¹ 'Do not be afraid of the king of Babylon, whom you are now fearing; do not be afraid of him,' declares the LORD, 'for I am with you to save you and deliver you from his hand.
- ¹² 'I will also show you compassion, so that he will have compassion on you and restore you to your own soil.
- ¹³ 'But if you are going to say, "We will not stay in this land," so as not to listen to the voice of the LORD your God,
- ¹⁴ saying, "No, but we will go to the land of Egypt, where we shall not see war or hear the sound of a trumpet or hunger for bread, and we will stay there";
- ¹⁵ then in that case listen to the word of the LORD, O remnant of Judah. Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, "If you really set your mind to enter Egypt, and go in to reside there,
- ¹⁶ then it will come about that the sword, which you are afraid of will overtake you there in the land of Egypt; and the famine, about which you are anxious, will follow closely after you there in Egypt; and you will die there.
- ¹⁷ "So all the men who set their mind to go to Egypt to reside there will die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence; and they will have no survivors or refugees from the calamity that I am going to bring on them.""
- ¹⁸ For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, "As My anger and wrath have been poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so My wrath will be poured out on you when you enter Egypt. And you will become a curse, an object of horror, an imprecation, and a reproach; and you will see this place no more."
- ¹⁹ The LORD has spoken to you, O remnant of Judah, "Do not go into Egypt!" You should clearly understand that today I have testified against you.
- ²⁰ For you have only deceived yourselves; for it is you who sent me to the LORD your God, saying, "Pray for us to the LORD our God; and whatever the LORD our God says, tell us so, and we will do it."
- ²¹ So, I have told you today, but you have not obeyed the LORD your God, even in whatever He has sent me to tell you.
- ²² Therefore you should now clearly understand that you will die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence, in the place where you wish to go to reside.

Jeremiah 43:1-7 (NASB77)

- ¹ But it came about, as soon as Jeremiah whom the LORD their God had sent, had finished telling all the people all the words of the LORD their God-- that is, all these words--
- ² that Azariah the son of Hoshaiiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the arrogant men said to Jeremiah, "You are telling a lie! The LORD our God has not sent you to say, 'You are not to enter Egypt to reside there';

After hearing the words they replied;

³ *but Baruch the son of Neriah is inciting you against us to give us over into the hand of the Chaldeans, so they may put us to death or exile us to Babylon."*

⁴ *So Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces, and all the people, did not obey the voice of the LORD, so as to stay in the land of Judah.*

⁵ *But Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces took the entire remnant of Judah who had returned from all the nations to which they had been driven away, in order to reside in the land of Judah--*

⁶ *the men, the women, the children, the king's daughters and every person that Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan, together with Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch the son of Neriah--*

⁷ *and they entered the land of Egypt (for they did not obey the voice of the LORD) and went in as far as Tahpanhes.*

They're response is typical of myriads of people who ask how to get right with God.

They seem very sincere, but when they hear about that true and only way, which is through trust in Jesus Christ they are unwilling to comply.

They're response makes it evident that they are seeking salvation on their own terms not God's

And yet they can be saved only by the provision of God's grace.

One of the major and repeated themes of the book of Romans is righteousness.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the common Greek root behind righteousness, justification, and their various verb and adjectival forms is found more than sixty times in Romans.

The present passage is one of many in the epistle that focus on God's righteousness, by which all righteousness is measured.

The only righteousness man possesses or attains within himself is unrighteousness, because that is the character and substance of his fallen nature.

Isaiah 64:6 (NASB77)

⁶ *For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; And all of us wither like a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.*

The supreme human tragedy is man's sin, and only the true God can solve it.

Only, the perfect righteousness God Himself can provide the righteousness that men need to be acceptable to Him.

God's righteousness is different from all other kinds of righteousness in many ways;

^{1st} it is different because of God who is its source

Isaiah 45:8 (NASB77)

⁸ *"Drip down, O heavens, from above, And let the clouds pour down righteousness; Let the earth open up and salvation bear fruit, And righteousness spring up with it. I, the LORD, have created it.*

^{2nd} it is different in essence.

It is comprehensive righteousness that fulfills both the precept and the penalty of God's law, under which all men stand judged. The precept of God's law is the perfect fulfillment of it, in other words sinless perfection,

which only the man Christ Jesus has ever fulfilled. This made Him then the perfect one to pay the penalty of the Law, by being made sin for us. The sinless became sin. And died for the sin.

3rd it is different in its duration.
His righteousness is everlasting. Existing from eternity to eternity. Thus the person who receives this righteousness receives everlasting righteousness

Paul having shown God the Judge and executioner, as it were, now shows the God of love, who reaches out His arms to sinful men in the hope that they will come to Him and be saved.

In this chapter verses 21-25a Paul gives seven additional elements of the righteousness that God divinely imparts to those who trust in His Son, Jesus Christ.

It is apart from legalism, built on revelation, acquired by faith, provided for all, given freely through grace, accomplished by redemption, and paid for by atoning sacrifice.

We will begin a study of these when we get together the next time.