

Romans Session 46

How to Be Right with God 4

Romans 3:21-25 (NASB)

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;*

We are still studying Paul's writings to the Roman Church, concerning Righteousness. A special kind of Righteousness, one that was apart from the legalism of the Law.

It was a Righteousness that came in the Person of Jesus Christ, it was manifested by revelation, it was revealed in the Word of God. It was received simply by Faith. Not by any works of man.

So it is a Righteousness that is acquired by Faith and only by Faith.

As we continue this we see that this Righteousness was provided for all.

RIGHTEOUSNESS PROVIDED FOR ALL

Romans 3:22b-23 (NASB)

²² *for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;*

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

The provision of salvation and the righteousness it brings is granted "for all those who believe."
Anyone will be saved who believes in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, "for there is no distinction."

Preaching in the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch, Paul declared,

Acts 13:39 (NASB)

³⁹ *and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses.*

In his letter to the Church of Galatia, the Apostle said,

Galatians 2:16 (NASB)

¹⁶ *nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.*

Jesus Himself said;

John 6:37b (NASB)

³⁷ *"the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.*

Anyone who believes in Jesus Christ, whether a murderer, prostitute, thief, rapist, homosexual, religious hypocrite, false teacher, pagan, or anything else, will be saved.

Listen, just as no one is good enough to be saved, no one is so evil that he cannot be saved.

This is the wonderful point;

Romans 3:22 (NASB)

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

Just as everyone apart from Christ is equally sinful and rejected by God, so everyone who is in Christ is equally righteous and accepted by Him. Even the "*foremost of all*" sinners, as Paul called himself was not too wicked to be saved.

1 Timothy 1:15 (NASB)

15 It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.

As there is no distinction those who are saved by grace, there is also not distinction among those who are lost.

Romans 3:23 (NASB)

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

The word *Hustereo* (fall short) has the basic meaning of being last or inferior. Every human being comes in last as far as the glory of God is concerned.

RIGHTEOUSNESS IS GIVEN FREELY THROUGH GRACE

Romans 3:24a (NASB)

24 being justified as a gift by His grace

By the same token, no one is ahead of anyone else as far as salvation is concerned. "**Being Justified**" refers back to the "alls" of the previous two verses, all those who have believed, of who all were sinful.

Just as there is no distinction among those who need salvation, there is no distinction among those who receive it, because they all are **justified as a gift by His grace**.

Dikaioo (justified) means to declare the rightness of something or someone.

Justification is God's declaration, that all the demands of the law are fulfilled on behalf of the believing sinner through the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Justification is a wholly forensic, or legal, transaction.

It changes the judicial standing of the sinner before God.

In justification, God imputes the perfect righteousness of Christ to the believer's account, then declares the redeemed one fully righteous

Justification must be distinguished from sanctification, in which God actually imparts Christ's righteousness to the sinner.

While the two must be distinguished, justification and sanctification can never be separated. God does not justify whom He does not sanctify.

Yet God justifies believers as a **gift by His grace**, not because of any good thing in the one who is justified.

By definition, a **gift** is something given freely, unearned and unmerited by the recipient. God's greatest of all gifts is that of salvation through His Son, given completely out of His divine **grace**.

Galatians 2:21 (NASB)

²¹ *"I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."*

The law reveals God's righteousness and exposes man's un-righteousness.

Grace, on the other hand, not only reveals God's righteousness but actually gives His righteousness to those who trust in His Son.

That **gift of grace** cost God the suffering and death of His Own Son on the cross, so that, for the believer, there is nothing left to pay.

RIGHTEOUSNESS IS ACCOMPLISHED BY REDEMPTION

Romans 3:24b (NASB)

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

Apolutrosis (redemption) is a strengthened form of *lutrosis*, which carries the idea of delivering, especially by means of paying a price.

It was commonly used of paying a ransom to free a prisoner from his captors or paying the price to free a slave from his master.

Because of man's utter sinfulness and inability to bring himself up to the standard of God's Righteousness, **the redemption** of a sinner could come only by that **which is in Christ Jesus**.

Only the sinless Savior could pay the price to redeem sinful men.

RIGHTEOUSNESS WAS PAID BY ATONING SACRIFICE

Romans 3:25a (NASB)

²⁵ *whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith*

Because man cannot become righteous on his own, God graciously provided for his redemption through the atoning sacrifice of His Own Son, Jesus Christ.

That sacrifice was not made in the dark or even in the hidden and holy recesses of the sacred temple, but openly on the hill of Calvary for all the world to see.

God Displayed His Son publicly as a propitiation.

Hilasterion (propitiation) carries the basic idea of appeasement, or satisfaction.

In ancient pagan religions, as in many religions today, the idea of man's appeasing a deity by various gifts or sacrifices was common.

In the New Testament **propitiation** always refers to the work of God, not of man. Man is utterly incapable of satisfying God's justice except by spending eternity in hell.

The only satisfaction, or propitiation, that could be acceptable to God and that could reconcile Him to man had to be made by God.

For that reason, God in human flesh, Jesus Christ,

1 Timothy 2:6a (NASB)

⁶ gave Himself as a ransom for all,

He appeased the wrath of God.

That ransoming **propitiation** made by Christ was paid in **His own divine blood**.

To **believers** scattered throughout the Roman Empire, Peter wrote;

1 Peter 1:18-19 (NASB)

¹⁸ knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers,

¹⁹ but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.

The Hebrew equivalent of *hilasterion* is used in the Old Testament in reference to the Mercy Seat in the Holy of Holies, where the high priest went once a year, on the Day of Atonement, to make a sacrifice on behalf of his people.

On that occasion he sprinkled blood on the Mercy Seat, symbolizing the payment of the penalty for his own sins and the sins of the people.

But that yearly act, although divinely prescribed and honored, had no power to remove or pay the penalty for a single sin.

It could only point to the true and effective offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Hebrews 10:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Hebrews 10:14 (NASB)

¹⁴ For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

Those who are sanctified by the offering of Christ are those who receive that sanctification **through faith** in Him.

Colossians 2:11-14 (NASB)

¹¹ and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;

¹² having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

¹³ When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,

¹⁴ *having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.*

In his beautiful hymn, Horatius Bonar wrote,

Not what my hands have done
Can save my guilty soul.
Not what my toiling flesh has borne
Can make my spirit whole.

Not what I feel or do
Can give me peace with God;
Not all my prayers and sighs and tears
Can bear my awful load.

Thy grace alone, O God,
To me can pardon speak;
Thy power alone, O Son of God,
Can this sore bondage break.

No other work save thine,
No other blood will do;
No strength save what which is divine
Can bear me safely through.