

# NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL

— A Study of Romans —

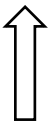
Lesson Six

Romans 3:21-31

*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,  
and are justified by his grace as a gift,  
through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...  
Romans 3:23-24*

## Day 1

**Pray:** Psalm 119:27



*Father, help me understand the meaning of your word so that I can meditate on your wonders.*

**Read:** Romans 3:21-31. Read it again in another translation such as NLT.

### Observe:

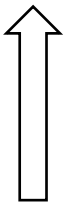
- Write key words and themes, repeated words, or phrases. Circle on your Scripture pages any transition words (therefore, but, because, if/then etc.)
- Are there any commands to be obeyed, or truths to be trusted?
- What questions do you have about the text?

## Day 2: Romans 3:21-22

We have now come to the glorious, good news that we have been waiting for! Our inability to keep God's law perfectly and the wrath of God against sin makes the good news that we have come to now, that much brighter. The transition begins with those two gracious words we find throughout Scripture—*But...God*.

1. What is revealed about the righteousness that God is now making known according to verse 21?
  - a. Why is this good news?

Scholar's Note: We should understand righteousness *of* God as righteousness *from* God.



Father thank you that instead of my unrighteousness or self-righteousness I have your righteousness! Instead of wrath against my sin, I receive grace! And instead of judgment you give me justification! Thank you God for stepping in and rescuing me!

2. According to verse 22, how are we made right with God apart from the law?

### Picture and Ponder

"Faith is the instrument by which one receives salvation, not the substance of salvation itself. If salvation came in the form of a milkshake, Jesus would be the shake itself and faith would be the straw or spoon by which we savor it."<sup>1</sup>



In every other religion in the world, you must earn your standing with God. You have to prove yourself worthy so that God will accept you. Your record of good must outweigh your record of bad, and even then, who knows if you kept an accurate tally or if your good was good enough?

- ◆ What are the implications for your life that righteousness from God is given through faith in Jesus and not something you have to try and achieve on your own?

3. Who is the righteousness from God available to according to 22?

### **Day 3: Romans 3:23-24**

1. Verse 22 says that God's offer of his righteousness is for *anyone* who puts their faith in Jesus. Why is there no distinction between who God offers his grace to according to verse 23?



*Fall short* is in the continuing present tense, meaning it is ongoing—we continually fall short. *Of the glory of God* "probably refers to his image or glory in which all were made." We were made to reflect who God is and yet we continually fail at reflecting him.

- ◆ Write out a prayer in response to this truth.

2. Explain or put into your own words each component of verse 23:

All-

Have sinned-

Fall short-

Of the glory of God-

3. By what are sinners justified (declared righteous) according to verse 24?

**Grace**- the undeserved favor or kindness of God shown to those who deserve his wrath.

### For Discussion

What are the implications that grace is a gift?

### Picture and Ponder

“Pardon and justification are essentially distinct. The former is the remission of punishment, the latter is a declaration that no ground for the infliction of punishment exists.”<sup>2</sup>

**Redemption**- deliverance effected by the payment of a ransom.

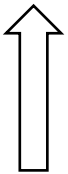
### Digging Deeper

Read the verses below. What do you learn about redemption? And if you have been redeemed by Jesus, what does that mean for your life?

Mark 10:45 *For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

1 Corinthians 6:19b-20 *You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.*

Romans 6:18 *...and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.*



*Jesus thank you that you gave your own life to recue me! Your precious blood bought me out of a life of darkness and into your dazzling light! You are a wonderful Savior! I love you Jesus. Help me to remember each and every moment that I am not my own, but I belong to you.*

4. Put in your own words how sinners are made right with God according to verse 24.

## Day 4: Romans 3:25-26

**Propitiation**- that which appeases the wrath of God against sin. (Jesus)

1. What was the payment that bought sinners out of captivity and appeased the wrath of God according to verse 25?



*And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth." Revelation 5:9-10*

- ◆ Ponder on your purpose and destiny as blood bought people of God. Write your thoughts.

2. How do we receive this deliverance according to v.25?

**Saving Faith**- the hand by which the righteousness of Christ is received. It involves our complete renunciation of any confidence in our own righteousness and a relying entirely on the perfect righteousness and death of Jesus.

### For Discussion

Your faith is not the *cause* of your salvation, it is the way you *receive* salvation. What happens when we see our faith as the foundation of our salvation?

## Picture and Ponder

"The value of faith is not to be found in itself, but entirely and exclusively in its' object, namely, Jesus Christ and him crucified."

## For Discussion

Which one of these statements is true and why?

I am saved because I have faith.

I am saved because I am counted righteous in Christ.

3. Write the definition of the word forbearance.

## For Discussion

Verse 25 is talking about how God deliberately disregarded the sins of the Old Testament believers who died before Jesus came to earth and paid the debt for the sins of all who would believe in him, including those Old Testament believers who looked forward to the Messiah. Why would it not be righteous for God to overlook sin forever?

4. Why did God put forth Jesus according to verse 26?

## Digging Deeper

In 2 Corinthians Paul expresses this same truth in a different way. How could God, the righteous judge, declare guilty people to be innocent and still maintain his righteousness?

2 Corinthians 5:21 *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*



Since Jesus, as the propitiation, soaked up in himself all of God's wrath against sin, and if you've received God's gift of grace and trusted in Jesus, what does that do to your feelings that God is mad at you or punishing you for something you've done?

- ◆ What would you say to a sister in Christ who feels that God is punishing her for something?

### Picture and Ponder

"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."<sup>3</sup>

## **Day 5: Romans 3:27-31**

1. Verse 27 states that all boasting and pride is completely ruled out now. Why does God's way of salvation exclude all boasting according to verse 28?
  - a. Why is this such good news?

### Digging Deeper

There are three things included in the first phrase of Ephesians 2:8-9 that are not from you but are a gift from God. Highlight the three words that tell what is not your own doing.

*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God; it is not from works, so no one may boast. (NABR)*





Why do we boast? Aren't we looking for praise, credit, or glory? Paul teaches that in the gospel there is no room for boasting. Salvation is of God from beginning to end. He gets all the glory for it. When we boast, we are trying to prove we are worthy—we are trying to justify ourselves. Instead, we should boast in Jesus. Galatians 6:14 says, *But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*

- ◆ "What you boast in is what fundamentally defines you; it is where you draw your identity and self-worth from"<sup>4</sup>. What are you tempted to boast about? How are you finding your self-worth or identity in the things you boast about? (You might not boast out loud but still be boasting in your thoughts.)
  
- ◆ What does it mean to boast in Jesus and the cross?
  
- ◆ If you think about boasting in terms of trying to prove your worth or justify yourself, what is this saying to Jesus in effect?

### Digging Deeper

How do the following verses help us understand the main point of verses 29-30?

*There is neither Jew nor Greek (Gentile), there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:28*

*For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, in all, and living through all. Ephesians 4:4-6*

2. Anticipating this question, Paul asks in verse 31, if salvation by grace through faith overthrows the law? He answers with an emphatic *no*. In what way does the gospel not nullify the law? Look back to 3:20. How does the law work with the gospel?
  - a. Since we are saved by grace and not by our works, what is the error in thinking that Paul is anticipating? (We will get into this more in Romans 6)

### Picture and Ponder

"We don't need to ignore the law we cannot keep or be crushed by the law we cannot keep...Only the gospel allows us to recognize and uphold the perfect standards of the law, because we know that the law matters enough to God for it to bring death; but we also know that it no longer means *our* death."<sup>5</sup>

### *One Thing:*

What is one thing from this week's study that God has impressed on your heart, or convicted you about; is there something new that you learned or is there a verse you want to ponder and meditate on?

Praise God for this and thank him for the work he is doing in your life. Ask him to help you remember this and live it out for his glory.

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<sup>1</sup> Doriani, Daniel M.. Romans (p. 155). P&R Publishing. Kindle Edition.

<sup>2</sup> Hodges p. 82 as quoted in Stott, John R.W. The Message of Romans. P. 110. Intersity Press USA

<sup>3</sup> Stott, John R.W. The Message of Romans. P. 115. Intersity Press USA

<sup>4</sup> Keller, Timothy. Romans 1-7 For You: For reading, for feeding, for leading (God's Word For You - Romans Series) (p. 93). The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition.

<sup>5</sup> Keller, Timothy. Romans 1-7 For You: For reading, for feeding, for leading (God's Word For You - Romans Series) (p. 99). The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition.

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