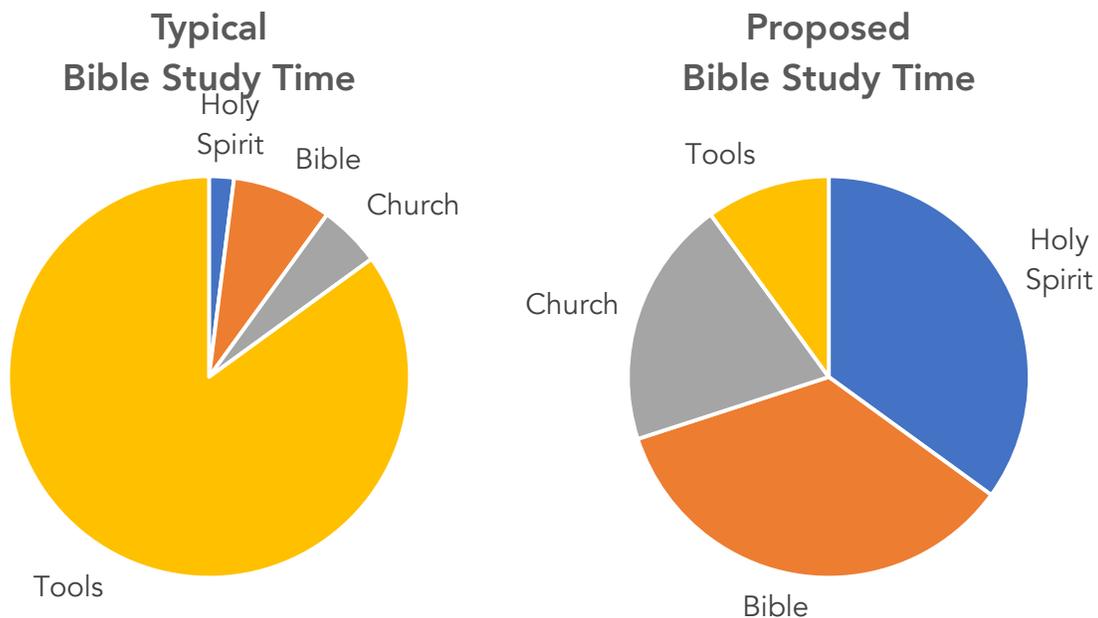


# Romans

The Righteousness of God Through Faith ([Romans 3:21-31](#))

## Introduction

A gentle review: **Did we do this?** Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.



Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Let's read the text that leads into this week's text.

## Greeting

**1 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, 2 which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, 3 concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh 4 and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, 5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, 6 including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,**

**7 To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints:**

**Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

## Longing to Go to Rome

**8** First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. **9** For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you **10** always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God's will I may now at last succeed in coming to you. **11** For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— **12** that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine. **13** I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the Gentiles. **14** I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. **15** So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

## The Righteous Shall Live by Faith

**16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. **17** For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

## God's Wrath on Unrighteousness

**18** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. **19** For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. **20** For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. **21** For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. **22** Claiming to be wise, they became fools, **23** and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

**24** Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, **25** because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

**26** For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; **27** and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for

one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

**28** And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. **29** They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, **30** slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, **31** foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. **32** Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

### God's Righteous Judgment

**1** Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things. **2** We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. **3** Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? **4** Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? **5** But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.

**6** He will render to each one according to his works: **7** to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; **8** but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. **9** There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, **10** but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. **11** For God shows no partiality.

### God's Judgment and the Law

**12** For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. **13** For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. **14** For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. **15** They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them **16** on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

17 But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God 18 and know his will and approve what is excellent, because you are instructed from the law; 19 and if you are sure that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, 20 an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth— 21 you then who teach others, do you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal? 22 You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 23 You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law. 24 For, as it is written, “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.”

25 For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. 26 So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? 27 Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. 28 For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. 29 But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

### God’s Righteousness Upheld

1 Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? 2 Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God. 3 What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? 4 By no means! Let God be true though every one were a liar, as it is written,

“That you may be justified in your words,  
and prevail when you are judged.”

5 But if our unrighteousness serves to show the righteousness of God, what shall we say? That God is unrighteous to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a human way.) 6 By no means! For then how could God judge the world? 7 But if through my lie God’s truth abounds to his glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner? 8 And why not do evil that good may come?—as some people slanderously charge us with saying. Their condemnation is just.

### No One Is Righteous

9 What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, 10 as it is written:

“None is righteous, no, not one;

11 no one understands;  
no one seeks for God.

12 All have turned aside; together they have become worthless;  
no one does good,  
not even one."

13 "Their throat is an open grave;  
they use their tongues to deceive."  
"The venom of asps is under their lips."

14 "Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness."

15 "Their feet are swift to shed blood;

16 in their paths are ruin and misery,

17 and the way of peace they have not known."

18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

19 Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. 20 For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

### Read: The Righteousness of God Through Faith (3:21-31)

21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— 22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 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. 26 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.

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

### Explain: The Righteousness of God Through Faith (3:21-31)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let's ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

The first big observation of this week's text is the first two words: "**But now.**" **But now** we are starting to turn the corner and peer down the hallway of Paul's logic to some good news. But now we are going to start seeing why Paul spent so much time on condemnation and wrath and judgment—he has a larger point (he almost always does).

The second—and much more minor point—involves capitalization. In Romans 3:21, the word law is capitalized once (the only time it's capitalized in **Romans**) and not capitalized once. I do not know for sure why the ESV capitalizes Law here—but I asked my daughter what she thought and this is what she came up with: **Anna Grace Fleming: The Jews refer to the Old Testament as 'The Law and the Prophets,' which is a title. Titles are capitalized, and this rule is carried out here, which is why the word 'law' in the clause before is lowercase.**

One more point—specifically about commentaries and resources at this point. You may have realized that your resource doesn't align perfectly to the way in which we're grouping verses for lessons. That's largely OK. One of the things that makes commentaries and resources different is the different way of organizing thoughts and paragraphs of the text. Don't let this bother you as it is rarely enormously significant.

### What do the words mean?

**21 But now** [*nyni de*; a transition phrase that Paul will use at least a half a dozen more times in **Romans** (and be on the lookout for these transition phrases—they'll help you figure out how to string his arguments together)] **the righteousness** [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in **Romans 1:17; 3:5**] **of God has been manifested** [perfect middle indicative; rendered apparent, appeared, manifestly declared, manifested, shewed] **apart from** [at a space, separately, apart, beside, by itself, without] **the law** [*nomos*], **although the Law** [*nomos*] **and the Prophets** [foretellers, inspired speakers, poets, prophets] **bear witness** [present middle participle; *martyreo*; originally it meant to be a witness, to testify, to charge, to give evidence, to bear record, to give a good/honest report, to give testimony, to witness; over time, however, the meaning changed to martyr as many who testified of Jesus ended up dying because of their testimony] **to it— 22 the righteousness** [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in **Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21**] **of God through** [*dia*; through the **middle**; the longest chord fitting in a circle is the diameter—the diameter goes through the center] **faith** [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in **Romans 1:5, 12, 17**] **in Jesus Christ for all who believe** [present active participle; have faith, credit, entrust, believe, commit to, put in trust with]. **For there is** [present middle indicative] **no distinction** [variation, difference, distinction; used in **1 Corinthians 14:7** of the difference in sound that different musical instruments make]: **23 for all have**

**sinned** [second aorist active indicative; missed the mark and not shared in the prize, erred, sinned, offended, trespassed] **and fall short** [present middle indicative; be later, be inferior, fall short, be deficient, come behind, be destitute, fall, lack, suffer need, be in want, be the worse] **of the glory** [very apparent glory, dignity, glory, honor, praise, worship; same word as in **Romans 1:23; 2:7, 10**] **of God, 24 and are justified** [present middle participle; rendered just, rendered innocent, freed, justified, be righteous; same word used in **Romans 2:13; 3:20**] **by his grace** [graciousness, gratifying, the divine influence on the heart and its reflection in the life; acceptable, benefit, favor, gift, joy liberality, pleasure, thanks] **as a gift** [gratuitously, without a cause, freely, for naught, in vain], **through** [*dia*; through the middle; the longest chord fitting in a circle is the diameter—the diameter goes through the center] **the redemption** [ransom in **full**, riddance, salvation, deliverance, redemption; **Robertson's New Testament Word Pictures: Common in the papyri as the purchase-money in freeing slaves**] **that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward** [second aorist middle indicative; placed before, exhibited, proposed, set forth] **as a propitiation** [expiatory (able to make atonement—**at-one-ment**), an atoning victim, lid of the Ark of the Covenant, mercy seat (the physical place on the planet where atonement occurred), propitiation] **by** [*dia*] **his blood** [blood, bloodshed], **to be received by** [*dia*] **faith** [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in **Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22**]. **This was to show** [declare, indicate, evident **token**, proof] **God's righteousness** [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in **Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22**], **because in his divine** [deity, divinity, godly] **forbearance** [self-restraint, tolerance, forbearance] **he had passed over former** [perfect active participle; already done, previously transpired, past] **sins. 26 It was to show** [declare, indicate, evident token, proof; same word used in **Romans 3:25**] **his righteousness** [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in **Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 26**] **at the present time** [occasion, set or proper time, opportunity, season, time], **so that he might be** [present middle infinitive] **just** [equitable, innocent, holy, just, righteous] **and the justifier** [present active participle; render just, render innocent, free, justifier] **of the one who has faith** [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in **Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25**] **in Jesus.**

**27 Then what becomes of our boasting** [boasting, whereof I may glory]? **It is excluded** [aorist middle indicative; shut out, excluded]. **By** [*dia*] **what kind of law** [*nomos*]? **By a law** [*nomos*] **of works** [work, toil, act, deed, doing, labor]? **No** [not indeed, nay, not], **but by** [*dia*] **the law** [*nomos*] **of faith** [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in **Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25, 26**]. **28 For we hold** [present middle indicative; take an inventory, estimate, conclude, account, esteem, impute, lay,

number, reason, reckon, suppose, think] **that one is justified** [present middle infinitive; rendered just, rendered innocent, freed, justified] **by faith** [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in [Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25, 26, 27](#)] **apart [separately]**, apart, beside] **from works** [work, toil, act, deed, doing, labor] **of the law** [nomos]. **29 Or is God the God of Jews only** [merely, alone, only]? **Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also,** **30 since God is one—who will justify** [future active indicative; render just, render innocent, free, justify] **the circumcised by [dia] faith** [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in [Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25, 26, 28](#)] **and the uncircumcised through faith** [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in [Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25, 26, 28, 30](#)]. **31 Do we then overthrow** [present active indicative; to render entirely idle, useless, abolish, cease, destroy, do away, of no effect, fail, loose, bring to naught, put away, vanish away, make void; same word used in [Romans 3:5](#)] **the law** [nomos] **by [dia] this faith** [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in [Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25, 26, 28, 30](#) (twice)]? **By no means** [second aorist active optative]! **On the contrary, we uphold** [present active indicative; stand, abide, appoint, bring, continue, covenant, establish, hold up, lay, present, set up, stand by] **the law** [nomos].

### Are there any repeated words?

God, righteousness, faith, law, just/justified/justifier

### Are there any repeated topics?

### What are some observations of the text?

**21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it** [If the Law and the Prophets have witnessed it, it's **not new**—Paul is just bringing it to light now]— **22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe** [Ironsides: To be justified is to be declared righteous. It is the sentence of the judge in favor of the prisoner. It is not the state or condition of the soul. We are not justified because we have become righteous in heart and life. God justifies first, then He enables the justified one to walk in practical righteousness. Schreiner: The Mosaic covenant belonged to an era of redemptive history that has now passed away. Its passing away is inextricably bound up with its inability to effect righteousness. But please know we are always under a law—either Moses' law or Jesus' law of love.]. **For there is no distinction: 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift** [Stott: The first

move was God the Father's, and our justification is "freely by his grace," his absolutely free and utterly undeserved favor. Grace is God loving, God stooping, God coming to the rescue, God giving himself generously in and through Jesus Christ.], through [God's plan for the redemption of the universe goes through Jesus; #Geometry] the redemption [He paid the ransom in full. Get out your wallet. What would you pay to redeem your son or daughter? You would give everything you have—and that's what the Father did for us—He gave Jesus for us. See Mark 10:45 and Matthew 20:28 for Jesus' view on why He came (hint: it's to be a ransom).] that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood [Paul just said the Ark of the Covenant is a shadow of something to come which Jesus would flesh out—even the Ark points us to Christ. Ironside: And he who died lives again and is Himself the abiding propitiation—literally, the mercy seat, the place where God can meet with man through Christ's atoning blood—available to faith. The apostle clearly alludes to the blood-sprinkled mercy seat on the ark of the covenant of old. Within the ark were the tables of the law. Above were the cherubim, 'justice and judgment' the habitation of God's throne. They are ready, as it were, to leap from that throne to execute God's righteous wrath against the violators of His law. But sprinkled upon the mercy seat is the blood that typifies the sacrifice of the cross. Justice and judgment ask no more. 'Mercy rejoiceth against judgment' (James 2:13), for God Himself has found a ransom.], to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness [The cross is the evident token of God's righteousness—it demonstrates His perfect judging and righteousness.], because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 26 It was to show his righteousness [Again—salvation shows God's righteousness] at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus [Robertson's New Testament Word Pictures: God's mercy would not allow him to leave man to his fate. God's justice demanded some punishment for sin. The only possible way to save some was the propitiatory offering of Christ and the call for faith on man's part.].

27 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. 28 For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. 29 Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, 30 since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. 31 Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law [This statement makes little sense here if the period that follows was the end of the letter. However, Robertson's New Testament Word Pictures: How he will show in chapter 4 how Abraham himself is an example of faith and in his life illustrates the very point just made. Besides, apart from Christ and the help of the Holy Spirit no one can keep God's law. The Mosaic law is only workable by faith in Christ.].

## Apply (What is the point?)

1. Salvation by faith is not just a **New** Testament thing
2. God's plan for the redemption of the universe goes through **Jesus**
3. The cross shows God's righteousness

## Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Correctly understand the **Old** Testament
2. Do not miss **Jesus**
3. Praise Him for His righteous judgments

Note: please look at the Quotes & Observations section this week—very good stuff from Schreiner, MacArthur, and Maclaren.

## Next week: Abraham Justified by Faith (4:1-12)

### Abraham Justified by Faith

**1** What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? **2** For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. **3** For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness." **4** Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. **5** And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, **6** just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: **7** "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; **8** blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin." **9** Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. **10** How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. **11** He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, **12** and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

## Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: **Romans** (ESV)
- Church: [bit.ly/FlemingSS](http://bit.ly/FlemingSS)
- Tools: [bit.ly/romans2017](http://bit.ly/romans2017)

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (**Romans**)
- Talk (about **Romans**—[bit.ly/romans2017group](http://bit.ly/romans2017group))
- Send (feedback to [jim314@yahoo.com](mailto:jim314@yahoo.com)) by Wed)

## Quotes & Observations

Albert Whiting (Calvin)

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

The miracle of justification is possible because a special righteousness exists separate from the works of the Law . . . a righteousness that comes to us through Jesus Christ.

God is our Mercy seat and He has been displayed by God as such.

Lastly, God demonstrates through Jesus' death that his hatred of man's evil is as real as his forgiveness of man's sin. God did not spare His son one iota of the wrath we deserve. The only way God could save us consistent with His own justice was the way.

He did—and it cost Him everything!

He talks about that the existence of righteousness apart from the law means everything to the believer. As "**radically corrupt sinners**" we can be made completely new. Our righteousness comes through faith. Righteousness through faith means we are "all on equal footing" ([vv. 29-30](#)).

One God=one way to salvation; justification is a miracle!

Chris Arnold (Barclay)

Christen Barber (Luther)

Darla Skinner (Mounce)

Doug Skinner (Phillips)

George Jackson (Murray)

Jessica Miller (Stott)

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

I know I saw this on the class page, but Paul starts with "but now." This means *nuni de* in Greek and is an adverb of time. He uses it when transitioning from a dark, gloomy picture to something wonderful God does for us. Paul uses this phrase 18 times in the Pauline epistles and twice in Hebrews.

**"Just as sin and Jesus Christ have nothing in common, so, too, righteousness and the Law have nothing in common."**

He quotes Karl Barth when talking about Paul **"His mission did not erect barriers, it tore them down."**

When referencing that “we all fall short” this means that we do not measure up to the sinlessness of Jesus. The righteous man is justified freely (as a gift), this justification is by His grace and provided through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. If people could work to be justified then we would have a reason to boast, but we are saved by grace not by works.

(This is one of the most positive things I’ve heard Paul say so far. I could not imagine having to constantly work for that.)

**Verses 25-26:** The lid of the ark of the covenant was called the “mercy seat.” It was the meeting place between God and men. Paul uses the same word for mercy seat to describe Jesus as for the ark “*hilasterion*.”

Justin Harness (Wiersbe)

Jim Fleming (Moo)

Julia Gregg (Schreiner)

Quote of this section: **“Paul maintains that the vindication and redemption of his people has been realized in the cross of Jesus Christ.”** That alone is a mouthful and I love the use of the word vindication by Schreiner. It’s like a 1-2 in a fight because he follows it with **“Indeed, both the saving and judging righteousness of God meet at the cross of Christ.”** (176) This truth rang for me the entire time I was reading the notes and the Scripture. It really says it ALL in just a few words. From a research perspective however, I enjoyed that Paul’s thesis in these verses [I tend to agree because I read ahead out of curiosity with Schreiner] is laid out and developed in **chapter 4** when he uses Abraham as the example. Thus far, I feel like it’s a brilliant layout of an argument. It reminds me of the New Tribes missions’ delivery of the Gospel in that they lay out need before redemption. In the western world, I think we have missed the mark here. (totally Julia opinion there). Because of how the Jews viewed Abraham—he was the perfect “bait” on the hook of faith and not works!

Focusing on **verses 21-26**—the critical mass. . . . Paul’s argument begins to shift, which I find parallel to the larger shift in thought. Paul is shifting his argument in exactly the same way as he wants the Jews to shift their focus from old covenant to new. He continues to drive the thought home that saving righteousness cannot be obtained through works or the law. **“The Mosaic covenant belonged to an era of redemptive history that has now passed away. Its passing away is inextricably bound up with its inability to effect righteousness.”** (180) I mean the choice of each word in those sentences is critical to delivery. I had to sit and meditate on that a minute. Though I have never taken Greek or Hebrew I am amazed out how well Schreiner breaks down the verbiage and word choice for a reader of my low caliber LOL. It has been insightful

as a companion text while reading the Scripture. There really is so much in this portion—it can be overwhelming at times. Paul really covers a great deal in these verses so I focused on the concept that most resonated with me.

Finally, in [verses 27-31](#), Paul speaks of the righteousness by faith for Jews and Gentiles. He draws some conclusions here and focuses on righteousness being a GIFT received through faith. My favorite quote from the section came in the overview at the beginning, “His [Christ’s] **death liberated believers from the slavery of sin and satisfied God’s judging righteousness.**” (200) Paul’s delivery in these verses contains three major thoughts: 1. Since righteousness is based on faith in what GOD has accomplished, boasting is out of the question, 2. Oneness of God demands that Jews and Gentiles are justified in the same way, and 3. Faith doesn’t nullify the law . . . it establishes it!!! What follow through . . . and to use an earlier metaphor—it’s the KO.

[Julie Fleming \(Keller\)](#)

[Karrie Harness \(MacArthur Bible Study\)](#)

[Michelle Erickson \(MacArthur\)](#)

God’s righteousness is different from all other kinds of righteousness in many ways. First of all, it is different because of its **source**, which is God Himself . . . Second, God’s righteousness is different in **essence**. It is a comprehensive righteousness that fulfills both the precept and the penalty of God’s law, under which all men stand judged. . . . Third, God’s righteousness is unique in its **duration**. His righteousness is everlasting righteousness, existing from eternity to eternity.

In [3:21-25a](#) 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 ([v. 21a](#)), built on revelation ([v. 21b](#)), acquired by faith ([v. 22a](#)), provided for all ([vv. 22b-23](#)), given freely through grace ([v. 24a](#)), accomplished by redemption ([v. 24b](#)), and paid for by atoning sacrifice ([v. 25a](#)).

Whether the law of God is the Mosaic law of the Jews or the law written in the hearts and consciences of all men, including Gentiles ([Romans 2:11-15](#)), obedience to it can never be perfect and therefore can never save. That is a devastating truth to everyone who seeks to please God on his own terms and in his own power—which is why the gospel is so offensive to the natural man.

The Mosaic laws were not given as a means of achieving righteousness but of describing God’s righteousness and showing the impossibility of men’s living up to it. The Mosaic sacrifices were not prescribed as a means of atoning for sin but of symbolically pointing to Jesus Christ, who Himself became the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. The commandments, rituals, sacrifices, and godly principles taught in

the Old Testament were, and still are, a part of His divinely inspired Word. But they could never remove sin, forgive sin, atone for sin, or give a new and righteous life to a sinner—no matter how zealously and sincerely he tried to abide by them.

His point here is that the perfect, saving **righteousness of God** not only is received apart from legalism and built on revelation, but is also acquired only by **faith**. That has always been the only way of salvation as far as man's part is concerned. The very point of **Hebrews 11** is to show that there has never been a means of salvation other than **faith** in the true God.

Jesus Himself said, "**The one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out**" (John 6:37). Anyone who believes in Jesus Christ—whether a murderer, prostitute, thief, rapist, homosexual, religious hypocrite, false teacher, pagan, or anything else—will be saved. Just as no one is good enough to be saved, no one is so evil that he cannot be saved. That is the wonderful point of **Romans 3:22**. **All those who believe** will be saved because in God's sight **there is no distinction**. Just as everyone apart from Christ is equally sinful and rejected by God, everyone who is in Christ is equally righteous and accepted by Him.

As far as the way of salvation is concerned, there are therefore only two religions the world has ever known or will ever know—the religion of divine accomplishment, which is biblical Christianity, and the religion of human achievement, which includes all other kinds of religion, by whatever names they may go under.

Olivia Swint (MacArthur)

Rachel Samsel (McGee)

Sean McGarvey (Ironsides)

Regarding the righteousness of God being manifested: "This is in no sense a wrought-out, legal righteousness, such as man was unable to produce for God. It is a righteousness 'without the law,' that is, altogether apart from any principle of human obedience to a divinely-ordained code of morals. It is a righteousness of God for unrighteous men and is in no wise dependent upon human merit or attainment." (p. 33)

"To be justified is to be declared righteous. It is the sentence of the judge in favor of the prisoner. It is not the state or condition of the soul. We are not justified because we have become righteous in heart and life. God justifies first, then He enables the justified one to walk in practical righteousness." (p. 35)

"In order thus to show grace in righteousness to admittedly guilty sinners, God must have a just and satisfactory basis. Sin cannot be overlooked. It must be atoned for. This has been effectuated 'through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus' (3:24)." (p. 35)

"And he who died lives again and is Himself the abiding propitiation—literally, the mercy seat, the place where God can meet with man through Christ's atoning blood—available to faith. The apostle clearly alludes to the blood-sprinkled mercy seat on the ark of the covenant of old. Within the ark were the tables of the law. Above were the cherubim, 'justice and judgment' the habitation of God's throne. They are ready, as it were, to leap from that throne to execute God's righteous wrath against the violators of His law. But sprinkled upon the mercy seat is the blood that typifies the sacrifice of the cross. Justice and judgment ask no more. 'Mercy rejoiceth against judgment' (James 2:13), for God Himself has found a ransom." (p. 36)

Stephen Mays (Stott)

Stephen Samsel (Stott)

These verses talk about how there is no distinctions among sinners. Sin is sin and without God, there is no hope. The verses also show that God initiated giving us the gift of eternal life. There was nothing that you or I could do to deserve this gift.

The first move was God the Father's, and our justification is "freely by his grace," his absolutely free and utterly undeserved favor. Grace is God loving, God stooping, God coming to the rescue, God giving himself generously in and through Jesus Christ.

Tim & Mila Archer (Maclaren)

- I. Paul's view of the purpose of the law.
  - A. Making known God's will as to man's conduct.
  - B. To drive home to men's consciences, the conviction of sin.
  - C. To bear witness, in conjunction with the prophets, to a future more perfect revelation of God's righteousness.
- II. Paul's view of universal sinfulness.
  - A. By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified?
  - B. There is no distinction, but all varieties of condition, character, attainment, are alike in this, that the fatal taint is upon them all.
- III. Paul's view of the remedy for man's sin.
  - A. Into the world of sinful men comes streaming the light of the "righteousness of God."

B. God should give righteousness brought to men by Jesus Christ.

C. The remedy should reach as far as the disease.

IV. Paul's view of what makes the Gospel the remedy.

A. Justified—accounted or declared righteous

B. Grace—His own loving disposition

C. Redemption—captivity, liberation, and the price paid

D. Paul doesn't merely point to Jesus Christ as Savior, but to His death as the saving power. We are to have faith.

E. The vindication of God's righteousness in forbearing to inflict punishment on sins committed before the advent of Jesus.

No Difference: [Romans 3:22](#)

**There is no difference:** All men, kings, beggars, civilized or savage, rich or poor, wise or foolish cultured or illiterate, breath the same breath, hunger and thirst, eat and drink, sleep, are smitten by the same diseases, and die at last the same death.

Paul triumphs and raises above all these small differences, between man and man: There is no difference.

I. There is no difference in the fact of sin.

II. There is no difference of God's love to us.

III. There is no difference in the purpose and power of Christ's cross for us all.

IV. There is no difference in the way which we must take for Salvation.