

## **ROMANS: RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH FROM START TO FINISH**

### **V. God's Righteousness Applied By Justification, Romans 3:21-5:21**

#### **A. How God Justifies Sinners**

**(Romans 3:21-31)**

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. The theme of the epistle to the Romans is that God's righteousness is available to man by faith from start to finish (Romans 1:16-17; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 441).
- B. This belief is often not accepted in Christendom: Some claim that one must have faith plus works to be justified, and others say that though we are justified by faith, we cannot righteously live a godly life by faith.
- C. In having established that all men stand helplessly condemned before God, Paul explained how God then can justly and lovingly pronounce "righteous" anyone who trusts in Christ as his Savior from sin (as follows):

#### **II. How God Justifies Sinners, Romans 3:21-31.**

- A. God had promised to provide His righteousness to man apart from the Mosaic Law according to the "Law and the Prophets," the Old Testament, Romans 3:21; *Ibid.*, p. 450. Later, Paul "illustrated this truth from the Law (Abraham: Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:1-3, 9-23) and from the Prophets (David: Ps. 32:1-2; Rom. 4:4-8)," *Ibid.*
- B. God's righteousness is provided for sinful man through faith in Jesus Christ unto all who believe, for there is no *diastole*, no "distinction" (Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 188) between Jew and Gentile, Romans 3:22. There is thus no "distinction" between pagan man, moral man, or religious man.
- C. This offer of God's righteousness cannot be based on any human distinction or perceived merit, for Paul had already established in Romans 1:18-3:20 that all have sinned and come short of God's glory, Romans 3:23.
- D. When one believes on the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Savior from sin, he is "justified," namely, he is pronounced righteous by God as a *dorean*, a "gift, without payment, gratis," *Ibid.*, p. 209; Romans 3:24a.
- E. The fact that God can so lovingly and yet justly pronounce a condemned sinner "justified" as a gift is due to the massive redemption that is in Christ Jesus due to His work on the cross, Romans 3:24b-26 (as follows):
  1. When the Apostle Paul used the term "redemption" in Romans 3:24, he used the Greek term *apolutrosis*, "a ransom payment," for the "death of Christ on the cross of Calvary was the price of payment for human sin which secured release from the bondage of Satan and sin for every person who trusts God's promise of forgiveness and salvation," *Ibid.*, Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 451.
  2. God presented Christ's death as a *hilasterion*, a "propitiation" the appeasing of God's wrath since Christ fully absorbed God's wrath against sinful man by dying as his Substitutionary Atonement for his sin on the cross, *Ibid.*; Romans 3:25a; Leon Morris, The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross, 1972, p. 167-174.
  3. God's presentation of Christ as man's "propitiation" is available simply by faith in Christ, Romans 3:25b.
  4. God can thus not only satisfy His righteous demands that sinful man's sin be punished by punishing Christ in sinful man's place but He can also remit the sins of Old Testament believers that God in His gracious forbearance really had not removed until Christ had died on the cross, Romans 3:25c.
  5. In satisfying God's righteous demand that sinful man be punished while also meeting God's infinite love for sinful man, God can be both just in fully punishing man's sin in His Substitutionary Atonement of Jesus on the cross and the infinitely loving Justifier of him who believes in Jesus, Romans 3:26.
- F. In Romans 3:27-31, Paul addressed five issues that he anticipated fellow Hebrews would raise to this teaching:
  1. First, all human boasting is completely shut out since salvation is entirely a work of God, Romans 3:27.
  2. Second, justification is thus not by way of observing the Mosaic Law, but by faith, Romans 3:28.
  3. Third, since there is no difference between Jew and Gentile in justification, God is the God of both, v. 29.
  4. Fourth, God will justify both Jew and Gentile on the same condition of faith in Christ, Romans 3:30.
  5. Fifth, salvation by faith does not nullify the Law, but it supports it, for the Law was meant to lead sinners to see their lost, helpless condition that they might cease relying on their works and trust in Christ, v. 31.

***Lesson:*** *To satisfy God's infinite righteousness that demands that He punish sinful man while also satisfying His infinite love for sinful man, God sent His Beloved Son Jesus Christ to die as sinful man's Substitute, absorbing the wrath of God against man's sin in His death, freeing God to pronounce righteous any sinner who simply believes in Jesus as his Savior from sin. This salvation is now freely and indiscriminately available to every human being!*

***Application:*** *(1) May we believers rejoice that our salvation in Christ is forever settled, for our sin was fully punished in Christ, our Propitiation! (2) May we also rejoice that we are now recipients of God's infinite love!*