

Sermon 8, Romans 3:21-25
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Turn with me please in your Bibles this morning to Romans 3. Those of you who have been regularly attending our Sunday morning services, you know that I have been preaching through the Book of Romans and we have worked our way through the first major section of the book, Chapter 1:18-3:20. Today, we will take up our study in vv. 21-25, but before we do so, I want to read God's final indictment on the whole human race found in **vv. 9-20 of Chapter 3.**
Pray

In the OT, we read the story of a man by the name of Job. Some of you are familiar with Job and his life. Job is the man who humanly speaking, was a good man and a very religious man. In one day his life fell completely apart. He lost all his life stock: he lost his oxen, he lost his donkeys, his sheep and his camels. Worse than that, he lost all of his servants who cared for his animals. And worst of all, he lost all 10 of his children, 7 sons and 3 daughters, in a single day due to 4 major catastrophes that struck his life.

In response to Job's trials, 3 friends came to Job to comfort him. But the three friends did not understand God well, nor did they understand man well. The three friends had a poor understanding of theology. And they told Job that he deserved what God was doing to him because he had not been righteous before God, he had not lived up to God's standard, he had sin in his life.

In response, Job who had a far better understanding of theology and God and mankind than his three friends did, Job asked a question that has troubled mankind since the beginning of time. **In Job 9:2, Job asked, "How can a mortal man be righteous before God?"** Job's question that plagued him was this: How can any man, how can I, how can you, how can any man be righteous before God? How can any person conform to the standard that God expects of Him? That is what the word, "righteous" means. **It means "conformity to God's standard."** Job asked the question, "How can any man conform to God's standard?"

Those of you who have been attending our Sunday morning services, you know that no man can and no man does. **Romans 3:9-12 say,**
V. 9, Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin.
V. 10, As it is written, "There is no one righteous, not even one;
V. 11, there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.
V. 12, All have turned away, they have together become worthless;
there is no one who does good, not even one."

That is God's judgment, God's indictment of the whole human race. We are all in a terrible predicament together. None of us conform to what God created us to be.

Now you might be tempted to think, "Well, if we are all in this together, maybe it isn't so bad after all. Because God can't damn us all." I was on a basketball team like that one time years ago. We were all lousy players. Our record for the season was 3 and 15. But in the locker room one day after the coach had kicked us off the gym floor and out of practice, one of the players said, "Hey, he can't bench us all. He has to play some of us." And we all took great comfort in that. Well, maybe you are thinking that God is like that. Maybe God will pass some of us, even though we all fail his test."

But, dear ones, that is exactly what God tells us in the first major section of Romans that he won't do. God has a standard of righteousness and it is a perfect standard and God won't lower the standard for any person; He won't grade us on a curve. His standard is complete and perfect and full obedience, or we all get damned to hell in the end. **Romans 2:5-12** says,

So there it is. We all get damned in the end because we all lack personal righteousness. In answer to Job's question, "How can mortal man be righteous before God?" we have to confess, we can't. In and of himself, mortal man cannot be righteous

before God. None of us have conformed to God's standard. In and of myself, in and of ourselves, there is no hope of acceptance by God. The very thing that we need the most in this life for God to look down from heaven upon us in favor, we can't supply. And the very thing that we will need the most in the next life at judgment day so that we won't be damned, we lack. That's the bad news of the first major section in God's Word to us in the Book of Romans. **We have no personal righteousness to offer up to God. There is no righteousness coming from mankind on earth up to God in heaven.**

So what are we to do? You remember what I told you the theme of the Book of Romans is. The theme is the gospel of God. Gospel means "good news." The theme of the Book of Romans is the good news of God. God has some good news for us and it is this.

In love, and grace and mercy to us, God has devised a plan; God has devised another way of bringing righteousness to some of us. That plan is given to us in vv. 21-31 of Romans 3. I hope that I can share it with you without crying in appreciation to God.

Look at v. 21, "**But now a righteousness from God**" notice the contrast. **A righteousness that comes down from God, not from us up to heaven, but down to us from heaven.**

Look at v. 22, we find the same phrase, "**This righteousness from God**". Do you see the contrast? All of Chapter 1-3 up to this time has been impressing upon us that we have no righteousness from earth to offer up to God. But Paul now tells us that "a righteousness from God", a righteousness coming from the other direction, from God down to us, and look at v. 21 again, "But now a righteousness from God . . . has been made known." The greek verb tense for the words, "has been made known" is the perfect tense, meaning the completed tense. It means that God has made this righteousness known and it is forever settled, it cannot be changed.

Now there is much that Paul is going to tell us about this righteousness from God that has been made known. Over the next few verses Paul packs them full so I want to give what he tells us about this righteousness to you in a way that I hope that you will forever remember it and rejoice in it.

And Paul tells us at least 8 important truths about the righteousness that comes to us from God.

- 1.) The righteousness that God offers to us is apart from any human effort or obedience on our part (V. 21).

V. 21, "But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, . . .". God's righteousness is "apart from law."

Gal. 3:10 says, "All who rely in observing the law are under a curse. Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the law."

- 2.) The righteousness that God offers to us is not new in the New Testament era (V. 21).

V. 21, "But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known (perfect tense verb meaning, "stands forever settled"), to which the Law and the Prophets testify."

Rom. 1:1-3a, "Paul a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, and set apart for the gospel of God. The gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures regarding his Son."

- 3.) The righteousness from God comes to all sinners who believe in Jesus Christ (V. 22).

V. 22, "This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe."

Rom. 1:16-17, "I am not ashamed of the gospel; for it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in the gospel a righteousness

from God has been revealed; a righteousness that is by faith from first to last as it is written, 'The righteous shall live by faith.'"

- 4.) The righteousness from God must come only through faith because no one has personal righteousness to offer up to God (Vv. 22-23).

Vv. 22-23, "This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, V. 23, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

- 5.) The righteousness from God is a "declared righteousness", not an earned righteousness (V. 24).

V. 22, "This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference,

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

V. 24, and are justified (greek word means, "declared righteous")

Contrast Rom. 2:13 and 3:20 where we are told that no one will be declared righteous by keeping the law.

- 6.) The righteousness from God is motivated by God's love and grace (V. 24).

V. 22, "This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference,

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

V. 24, and are justified ("declared righteous") freely by his grace . . ."

- 7.) The righteousness from God can be freely given to us because of what God chose to do in Jesus, His Son, for us. Through Jesus believing sinners are redeemed ("delivered, saved") (V. 24).

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V. 24, and are justified ("declared righteous") freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."

- 8.) The righteousness from God can be freely given to us because of what God chose to do in Jesus, His Son, for us. God presented Jesus, His Son, as the mercy seat for our sins (V. 25).

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V. 25, "God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement through faith in his blood."

Conclusion: For those who want to be accepted by God through being a good person (through obedience to God's commands, through your own efforts at righteousness), please know this: That method of acceptance with God is not God's method! You are sure to be damned in the end! Personal righteousness does not exist.

God's method of acceptance with Him is through what He has provided freely for you through Christ. Through Christ, God has provided a righteousness from Him. Jesus was sent to the earth to live under God's law and to earn God's righteousness for us. When sinners hear this glorious good news and believe in Jesus as the One whom God presented for them, God declares them to be righteous by imputing to them the

obedience of Christ. Theologians refer to this imputed righteousness as an ALIEN RIGHTEOUSNESS!

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Sermon 8

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Read Romans 3:9-20

“How can a mortal man be righteous before God?” (Job 9:2)

“Righteous” means “conformity to God’s standard.” Job asked the question, “How can any man conform to God’s standard?”

Romans 3:9-12,

V. 9, "What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin.

V. 10, As it is written, "There is no one righteous, not even one;

V. 11, there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.

V. 12, All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."

Romans 2:5-12

We have no personal righteousness to offer up to God. There is no righteousness coming from mankind on earth up to God in heaven.

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Romans 3:22, "This righteousness from God".

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3.) The righteousness from God comes to all sinners who believe in Jesus Christ (V. 22).

V. 22, "This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe."

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7.) The righteousness from God can be freely given to us because of what God chose to do in Jesus, His Son, for us. Through Jesus believing sinners are redeemed (“delivered, saved”) (V. 24).

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9.) The righteousness from God that comes to believing sinners, because God presented Jesus as a sacrifice, demonstrates God's justice (Vv. 25-26).

V. 25, "God presented him *as a sacrifice of atonement* through faith in his blood. He (God) did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished-

V. 26, "He (God) did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies the man who believes in Jesus."

V. 24, "Redemption" (Greek word means, "redemption", "deliverance", "riddance", "salvation."