

Sermon #9, Romans 3:21-31
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“95+% of the people in the world think that they gain God’s approval, earn His acceptance and will eventually be admitted into heaven following this life because they have done good works while living on earth.” (James Kennedy, Evangelism Explosion Surveys)

The Book of Romans has been written for the purpose of contrasting man’s method of gaining righteousness with God’s method of man obtaining righteousness.

As a whole, men think that through attempting to do good, through attempting to obey God’s laws, they will have sufficient righteousness to please God and their efforts will ultimately be sufficient to earn God’s approval and acceptance for admittance into the life hereafter.

But God says, “Therefore, no one will be declared righteous in His sight by observing the law” (Romans 3:20).

God’s method of man obtaining righteousness is through faith in Jesus Christ.

Romans 3:21-25a

V. 21, “But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.

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 through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

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

Ephesians 2:11-12, “Remember, that at the time when you were separate from Christ, you were without hope and without God in the world.”

Galatians 2:16, “We know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we too have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be declared righteous by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law, no one will be declared righteous.”

Galatians 2:21, “If righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing.”

Galatians 3:21, “If a law could have been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.”

Three Reasons That God Presented Christ As A Sacrifice For Sins

- 1.) God’s presented Christ as the sacrifice for sins because of God’s love for His creatures-for you and me (Rom. 1:7, Rom. 5:8; Gal. 2:20).

Rom. 1:7, “To all in Rome who are loved by God . . .”

Rom. 5:8, “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Gal. 2:20, "The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

2.) God presented Christ as the sacrifice for sins in order to demonstrate His own righteousness (justice) (Rom. 3:25-26).

Rom. 3:25, "God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did it to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished-

Rom. 3:26, "he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just . . ."

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

He means the sins committed under the OT dispensation. All those who lived up to the time of Christ who died and went to heaven, they never had their sins punished during their life on earth or even after they died. The blood of bulls and goats can never take away sins. Yet, upon their deaths, God took all the OT believers to heaven and acted as if their sins were no big deal to Him. Well, how could God do that and still be just and righteous Himself? He couldn't. Sometime, somewhere, if God himself is righteous and qualified to determine what is righteous and what is not and who is righteous and who is not, then sometime, somewhere, God must punish all those sins committed under the Old Dispensation. When did God do that? Paul is saying that God had the punishment of these sins in mind when He sent His son to the cross so that His own righteousness would be vindicated.

Not only then did Christ die in payment for the sins of those who live after the cross, allowing God to freely forgive us because a sacrifice of atonement has been sufficiently made for our sins. But according to Paul, Jesus' death was also the payment that allowed God to wipe out, cancel, forgive the sins of the believers that lived during the Old Testament dispensation.

"And the implication is, that apart from this sacrifice of Christ, the justice of God would have no more allowed 'forbearance' and delay of penalty, in the instance of mankind, than it did in that of the fall angels." W. T. G. Shedd

3.) God presented Christ as the sacrifice for sins because of His desire to be the One who freely grants righteousness to sinners who believe in Jesus (Rom. 3:26).

Rom. 3:25, "God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did it to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished-

Rom. 3:26, "he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies (declares righteous) those who have faith in Jesus."

A series of 6 questions in which Paul is going to impress upon us WHO deserves the praise for man getting righteousness.

QUESTION 1: "WHERE THEN IS BOASTING?" (v. 27)

ANSWER: "IT IS EXCLUDED." (v. 27).
(It is forever shut out! The verb is an aorist indicative passive)

QUESTION 2: "ON WHAT PRINCIPLE (is boasting

excluded?” (v. 27)

QUESTION 3
BEGINS THE
ANSWER:

“ON THAT OF OBSERVING THE LAW?”

NO.

“BUT ON THAT OF FAITH.”

Romans 4:1-3, “What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter? If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about-but not before God. What does the Scripture say, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.’”

Eph. 2:8-9, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast.”

“FOR WE MAINTAIN THAT A MAN IS JUSTIFIED BY FAITH APART FROM OBSERVING THE LAW.”
(V. 28)

QUESTION 4: “IS GOD THE GOD OF THE JEWS ONLY?” (V. 29)

QUESTION 5
BEGINS THE
ANSWER:

“IS HE NOT THE GOD OF GENTILES TOO?” (V. 29)

YES, OF GENTILES TOO. (V. 29)

“SINCE THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD
(V. 30). . .

WHO WILL JUSTIFY THE CIRCUMCISION
(JEW) BY FAITH AND THE
UNCIRCUMCISION (GENTILE) THROUGH
THAT SAME FAITH
(V. 30).

QUESTION 6: “DO WE, THEN, NULLIFY THE LAW BY THIS FAITH?” (V. 31).

ANSWER: “NOT AT ALL!” (V. 31)

“RATHER, WE UPHOLD THE LAW.”
(V. 31)

“To every sincere believer the doctrine of salvation by God’s free grace through faith is a very precious treasure. To realize for one’s own soul what this glorious truth means can be a very thrilling and unforgettable experience.

Is it possible that we have become so used to the expression ‘forgiveness of sins’ that it has lost most of its meaning for us? Do we reflect on the fact that these sins are infinitely more heinous in God’s sight than they are to us? That he nevertheless blots them out once and for all, lovingly assuring us, ‘I will forgive your iniquity, and your sin will

I remember no more'? Yes, he forgives even though, in order to do this, he because of the demand of his perfect righteousness, had to punish them in his Son, the One whom he loved as God alone can love!

But being declared righteous implies more, much more, than forgiveness. The heavenly Father, having canceled our debt, then as it were lovingly throws his arms around us (see Lk. 15:20) and tells each of his pardoned ones, 'You are *my* son, *my* daughter, my very own. And being my child, you are also my heir' (Rom. 8:17).

Think of it, 'Heirs of God' are we and 'joint-heirs with Christ,' united with him by a bond of love that can never be severed!

So amazing and so abounding is God's love for us that never shall we be able to measure it. Throughout all eternity the mysteries of that love, infinite in number, will continue to be revealed to us. And we shall glorify him:

By the sea of crystal, saints in glory stand,
Myriads in number, drawn from every land.
Robed in white apparel, washed in Jesus' blood,
They now reign forever with the Lamb of God.

Unto God Almighty, sitting on the throne,
And the Lamb victorious, be the praise alone.
God has wrought salvation, he did wondrous things;
Who shall not extol Thee, Holy King of Kings?

William Kuipers