

Through Faith

Romans 3:21-24 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,

❖ Why is it important that we are righteous?

- There is no making it into heaven unless your record is clean
 - If you are not righteous... you do not enter into eternal life
 - You must be righteous in the eyes of God, or He will cast you out of His presence

❖ Consider Your Standing Before God This Morning

- **Consider if you would... you sins before Almighty God...**
 - Consider your pride, your sinful thoughts, harmful words, greedy hands...
 - Consider yourself this morning...
- **None of us stand as righteous people this morning...**
 - None of us... Not one of us is righteous...
- **Consider God's Holy Standard if you would...**
 - That one sin against God is like breaking them all...
 - Consider Almighty God's perfect self...
- **Oh... please consider yourself this morning...**
 - Look into the dark recess of your hearts...
- **Now... what if... in spite of your darkness...**
 - In spite of the five million sinful things about you...
 - In spite of it all... That today....
- **God could simply say to you...**
 - I declare you righteous...
 - **I make a decree today that this man woman or child is declared righteous...**
 - Yes... I know their past... I know their present... I know their future...
 - But today... I make a judgment... I declare this person righteous...
- **What if... it is true... that God wants to say to all you sinners...**
 - You are now right with me...
 - What if He is saying....
 - I know you are a rebel... I know your heart has been far from me
 - I know you are caught in the web of sins delight....
 - I know you are unrighteous...
 - I know that...
- **But... I am willing to declare you righteous...**
 - What a heavy burden lifted...
- **Step back and look at it...**
 - If you just can not see how that is true...
 - If you struggle with a perfect and righteous God...
 - Essentially granting amnesty to billions of sinners...
 - If you struggle with believing He can call you righteous... declare you righteous...
 - **Look closely...**
 - If that isn't what the cross is about... then what is it?
 - Isn't that why Jesus died...
 - Isn't He the one who took on the sins of mankind...

- That is the whole point of the cross...
- **God can declare us just... declare us righteous...**
 - ◆ And He is the one responsible for it... since He died...
 - ◆ He is the justifier... He makes it possible...
- **And Finally...**
 - ◆ He keeps His righteous status...
 - ◆ He is not just declaring a bunch of murderers and gossips and adulterers and liars Righteous
 - If He overlooked sin... He would be worse than a sinner...
 - ◆ **Yet, He keeps His righteous status...**
 - Because on the cross... Jesus pays the penalties... He takes on God's Wrath
 - He knows God's hatred for sins...
 - He receives God's punishment for sins...
 - He carries our burden
- **Let me give you a verse to chew on: We will be getting to it next week...**
 - **Romans 3:26 ...so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.**
- **God is Able to Declare you Righteous even this moment...**
 - Oh praise God this morning... for his endless mercies...
 - And He is willing...
 - So that is what the text today will teach us

❖ **Outline:**

- **1) Bring Your Nothing and Belief**
- **2) God's Righteousness is Seen**
- **3) God's Righteousness was Bought**
- **4) God's Righteousness is Free**
- **5) All Men Need God's Righteousness**

❖ **Bring Your Nothing and Belief**

- **We are all like the man on death row...**
 - He has exhausted all of his defenses...
 - He has no more evidence in his favor
 - All signs point to his guilt...
- **He is guilty...**
 - And he has given up...
 - Because he knows he is guilty...
 - He knows that the death sentence is just and He is deserving...
- **He has nothing...**
 - This is us... We have nothing to bring to the case...
- **But... We do have an avenue for release...**
 - We have a way to freedom...
 - And I want to look at it first...
- **Verse 22**
 - **the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.**
 - **For all who believe**
 - I want to start with this one point today...
 - So everyone can hear... so everyone can understand...
 - I do not want to stick this at the end... I want you to consider it from the beginning...
 - **Notice that last phrase:**

- For all who believe

➤ **You must believe...**

- You can hear all of this... and walk out of here guilty
- You can know all of this in your mind and walk out guilty...
- But, if you want to be declared innocent... you must believe this morning...

➤ **Through Faith For all who Believe:**

- There are two main types of Faith
- **False Faith and True Faith**

- *A.W. Tozer stated: faith of Paul and Luther was a revolutionizing thing. It upset the whole life of the individual and made him into another person altogether. It laid hold on the life and brought it unto obedience to Christ. It took up its cross and followed along after Jesus with no intention of going back. It said good-bye to its old friends as certainly as Elijah when he stepped into the fiery chariot and went away in the whirlwind. It had a finality about it. It snapped shut on a man's heart like a trap; it captured the man and made him from that moment forward a happy love-servant of his Lord.*

- **John MacArthur in his commentary on Romans rightly points out that faith**

- Involves the will, the emotions and the intellect...
- The Roman believers had become "obedient from the heart"
- **Emotions mean nothing by themselves...**
 - ◆ But true faith creates a deluge of emotions for the person of faith
- **No person can place their faith in something they do not understand...**
 - ◆ I do not say understand fully...
 - ◆ But... there must be a knowledge involved with faith
 - ◆ They must come to a "knowledge of the truth"

- **False Faith abounds in our culture today...**

- Many people have faith in the idea of faith... never knowing what they actually believe in
- Many have faith in something they said or did as a child
- Some have faith in their church
- Others have faith in their family
- Some even have faith in their so called good deeds...
- None of these things are true faith...

➤ **The Scriptures are littered about with the two types of faith**

- We know Jesus tells of the parable of the wheat and the tares
 - Some are true believers... others are false...
- We even see Jesus making sure the crowds that followed Him knew the difference...
 - We read of people who believed...
 - Only later to see Jesus challenge their belief because He knew their hearts...

➤ **If You want God to declare you righteous in His eyes...**

- **You must come empty, but believe fully**
- **You must come empty, but believe fully**

➤ **Through Faith for all who believe...**

- Do you see what is being done here... I find it exciting...
 - I find it revealing...
- I would ask the question of this little statement...
 - Why say it is through faith for all who believe...
 - Aren't faith and believing the same thing...
 - And if they are the same thing... Why is Paul writing this way...
 - Why not say one or the other...

◆ In fact... they both come from the same Word... and they both mean the same thing...

◆ But... One is a Noun and another is a verb...

➤ **So... It is something we must have and something we must do...**

▪ **Remember...** what are we seeking here? The Righteousness of God...

- His declaration that we are right with Him....
- And how does it happen...

▪ **It is through Faith... which is a noun... it is something we have...**

- The person has a tangible and very real faith... it is a noun....

▪ **It happens by believing**

- Believing here is a verb...
- Believing is what we do...
- Believing is also in the active voice...

◆ So, it is the person who believes what He has been told from God's Word

➤ **It happens something like this:**

▪ The gospel is preached... the Word of God is read or Spoken...

- The person hears the Word...
- God creates faith inside of the person... in the heart...
 - ◆ because the Spirit of God is working with the Word

- And Because faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God...

▪ Then the person responds by believing...

➤ **So... today...**

▪ Look and see if you have faith...

▪ Take that faith and believe with it...

▪ Believe the promises of God today...

▪ That He can make you right with Him **through faith for all who believe...**

➤ **Faith is the Avenue to Free Salvation... Faith is how we are saved without earning it... without works**

➤ **Next...**

▪ We come to what it is we are seeking to gain...

▪ The righteousness of God... (briefly)

❖ **2) God's Righteousness is Seen**

▪ **²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—**

➤ **What is the righteousness of God?**

▪ It is His Holy and righteous nature...

▪ His perfect character

➤ **The righteousness of God has been manifested...**

▪ Manifested means to be revealed...

▪ So... here is a declaration by Paul... that God has shown his righteousness...

- That He has shown the way for people to receive this righteousness
- Ok... now...

➤ **We have just finished Paul's great argument**

▪ Where He is making the point... that no person is without sin... all are guilty

▪ And He says no one has anything they can say...

▪ **He goes on to say... no man will be declared righteous by God...**

- On account of works of the law...
- Working will never declare a person righteous...
- Because they have sinned against God too many times

- **So... if the righteousness of God can not be attained through working**
 - If it can't be attained by following the law....
 - Then... what? Then how?
- **It is revealed apart from the law...**
 - So... hear me clearly... Paul is saying...
 - let's cut out our attempts to attain a right standing with God based off our deeds
- **It has been seen apart from the law...**
 - Meaning... there is a different way to get it...
 - And the law was never able to give it...
- **As a Matter of Fact... the law was not intended to do that...**
 - Rather... its' purpose is to lead someone to Christ by showing their need
 - It is to show us what sin is
 - It is to stop our mouths before Almighty God...
- **Let me just give you a quick answer... How was it revealed... (It being God's righteousness)**
 - Through **Faith** in the Work of Jesus...
 - That is what Paul is going to answer with...
 - And there is a **substance** to what Jesus has done...
 - And there is a **realness** to the faith someone has in what **Jesus** has **done**...
- **Paul says something interesting...**
 - **He says... this is not a new concept...**
 - This whole idea of being right with God outside of working the law
 - Outside of being legalistic and following long lists of rules...
 - **He says... the O.T. scriptures witnessed to this...**
 - We see it in the example of Abraham who believed God and was credited righteousness
 - We see it in David who praised God for not counting his sin and lawless deeds...
 - ◆ David says the man is blessed...
 - ◆ He sees the man's sins... yet He knows God will not count them...
 - We see it pictured in 1 Peter 3 where He speaks of the women of faith...
 - ◆ Those who hoped in God...
- **The Righteousness of God has been revealed...**
 - But how... in what way? Based off of what...?
 - We have already said it has been revealed through faith
 - But... faith is how we are credited with God's righteousness...
 - How has it been revealed? Or How can it be possible?
 - ◆ What is the basis of God's righteousness... becoming Righteousness for men
 - ◆ Look to the last part of verse 24 (this is a little out of order within the verse)

❖ 3) God's Righteousness was Bought

- **through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,**
- Redemption that is in Christ Jesus...
 - Here is how it is possible for any man to receive the righteousness of God...
 - To have it credited to their account before Almighty God...
- *Redemption was commonly used of paying a ransom to free a prisoner from his captors or paying the price to free a slave from his master.*
- **Redemption**
 - **Illustrate: Simply Put... We were like slaves...**
 - Picture the idea of a slave...
 - A person owned by someone else...

- ◆ During bible times, many people were slaves because they were in such great debt
 - ◆ Or had committed a crime
- Its like being in prison,
 - ◆ Slaves were treated like animals...
- **I used to go to the sale barn for cattle**
 - ◆ If we wanted to buy a cow, we had to make a bid and pay a price with dollars...
- **The Idea of Our Redemption is that we were once slaves to something else...**
 - Picture yourself if you can, as a slave being brought before men to be sold...
 - You have no rights, no freedom...
 - But it perfectly illustrates our former or current state...
- **Redemption Means: Freedom Bought**
 - **Now Consider your slavery again...**
 - And consider as you sit on the auction block
 - Already owned by an evil owner...
 - Ten more evil owners are there to buy you and keep you into slavery...
 - **But there is one who wants to buy your freedom...**
 - He wants to take his money and buy you out of slavery...
 - So you no longer are under the bondage of a slave master...
 - If you could you would buy yourself out of slavery... but you do not have the ability
 - **So, this benevolent Person purchases you with his own hard earned currency**
 - And He sets you free from slavery
 - You no longer owe anything...
 - This is the meaning of redemption...
- **This is What Jesus has Done:**
 - **Through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus**
 - We have been bought back
 - In Christ Jesus...
 - We will see that it is through His death and resurrection that He redeemed us...
- **His Death Buys our Freedom**
 - **Hebrews 9:22b ... and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.**
 - **The Life of Jesus was spilled out as He died...**
 - His blood being shed signified His life being given...
 - And it is this shedding of blood, this giving of His life...
 - ◆ That translates into the forgiveness of sins...
 - **The blood of Jesus poured out, meaning His life being given**
 - Was the currency needed for redemption...
 - ◆ Nothing else was suitable...
 - ◆ No one else's blood was capable...
- **Do you have faith in that this morning?**
 - Do you believe this?
 - If you do truly... then you would respond... with repentance...
 - And maybe you have already done this...
 - Repentance is the inward and outward response of a person who believes
 - When a person has faith and believes... they repent and turn to God...
 - And they live for God...
- **Now... what else do we see...**
 - We see it was bought... we also now see it is free...

- It... being... our opportunity to be declared righteous by God
- It was bought by Jesus... so it is given freely to us
 - Our being justified... is free

❖ 4) God's Righteousness is Free

- ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift,
- probably easier understood as "being justified" notice the "being" part
- **Justified means... to be declared righteous...**
 - Being justified does not mean that we are righteous...
 - Oh no... it does not mean that...
- **Do not confuse what being justified means...**
 - It means we are declared righteous...
 - **I'll give you an example of this:**
 - Luke 7:29 ²⁹ (When all the people heard this, and the tax collectors too, they declared God just, having been baptized with the baptism of John,
 - ◆ This word... declared God just... is the same word used here in Romans...
 - ◆ Where we see... being justified...
 - ◆ So... how is it that man can justify God...
 - By declaring him just...
 - And this is what God has done here...
- **The verb here is also... a passive verb... being justified**
 - Meaning you do not do the being justified...
 - It is done to you... God is doing it...
- **By his grace as a gift...**
 - 2 main points I want you to see here...
 - 1) It is a gift
 - 2) it is by grace
- **1) as a gift....**
 - This means we can not pay for it...
 - It has been given to us freely...
 - God says... here is a gift... if you will believe...
 - You can have this gift...
 - Believing is not a work... it is not a payment...
 - **Illustration: this is an ok illustration...**
 - It is sort of like Christmas...
 - ◆ Your parents say... I have this awesome gift for you... it is truly amazing...
 - ◆ You just need to believe that it comes from me...
 - ◆ Is that a work? Is that you earning it?
 - ◆ Is there any room for you to brag about how you got your new gift?
 - ◆ No... it removes all ability to boast in your own abilities...
 - **You parents were trust worthy...**
 - ◆ You know they purchased the gift because you know they are able...
 - **Jesus purchased the gift for you...**
 - Look at our second point
- **By His grace...**
 - So the first thing we saw... is that you can not by it...
 - Now... we see you can not work for it either...
 - You can not pay it off...

- Because it is by His grace...
 - Grace is: unmerited or unearned favor or kindness from God
- **Paul explains this more fully**
 - **Romans 11:6 But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.**
- **Paul explains it to us in two ways so we will not be confused...**
 - It is something you can not buy... and it is something you can not work for
- **Why did God give you such an awesome gift...**
 - The gift of declaring you righteous...
 - Because He is a gracious God...
 - **Ephesians 2:8 For it is by grace you have been saved**
 - God's throne is described as **"a throne of grace"** in Hebrews 4:16
- **Consider**
 - **Ephesians 1:7-8 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us.**
- We have a gracious God and Father...
 - And it is a good thing...
 - Because we all need His grace...

❖ 5) All Men Need God's Righteousness

- **²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**
- No need for man's goodness...
 - It will not do any good...
- **All have sinned**
- **All have fallen short of the glory of God**
- **This means... We have have not treasured the glory of God...**
 - We have dishonored the glory of God...
- **Because men have failed at bringing Glory to God...**
 - Because they have dishonored Him
 - And they have not treasured God as He deserves...
 - Pauls says... All men have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...
- **Paul has spent a lot of ink on making this point...**
 - And finally He comes to a climax here...
 - And He tells His Audience...
 - All men have sinned...
- **Is this you?**
 - Have you treasured God in your life as you ought?
 - Have you honored God with all of your life?
- **Then you are in need of the grace of God**
 - So you can have redemption from you sins
 - Therefore... You must believe today

❖ Invitation

- Do you have Faith?
- Do you believe?
- Turn from your sins and to God today...
- **Romans 10:13 For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."**