



Paul's Epistle to the Romans

Romans 3.1-21-31

Righteousness of God revealed in Christ

Romans Theme: The Gospel reveals the Righteousness of God

I. Rom 1.18-32 The Righteousness of God first revealed as “wrath”

Paul teaches that God in **wrath** has taken away His hand of blessing and protection from mankind because they have rejected:

1. serving God whose divine nature and power can readily be seen by reason in **Creation**
2. the voice of **Conscience** given to all men to restrain their baser instincts
3. the **Laws of nature within man's heart** which produce morals, law and order and culture
4. **Reason** which understands the **Laws of Nature** has been rejected breaking down society and nations

II. Rom 2 - The Righteousness of God is also revealed by the **LAW**

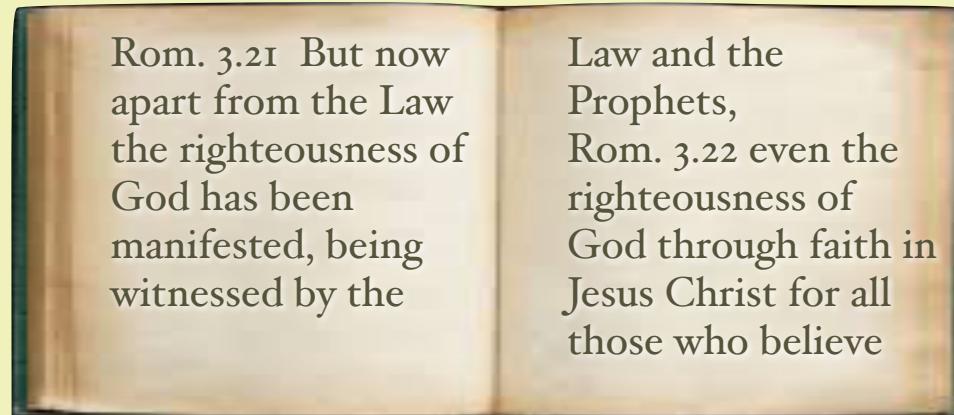
Paul now reveals that God gave the revealed Law to the Jews to reveal His righteousness and give man a standard of life in covenant with Him

1. But as the Jews outwardly kept the “letter of the Law” they ignored the command for “heart obedience” and became proud as Jews who thought they are justified just by being a chosen Jew
2. Paul stands in the light of an ‘impartial’ righteous God and proves by scripture that Jews and Gentiles both have violated God-given Laws and are therefore worthy of wrath

III. Romans 3.1-20 God's Righteousness through Wrath and Law brings the **conscience and reason** of all mankind to the **righteous** conclusion that “*all have sinned and come short of the glory of God*” (3.23)

1. Paul takes up and refutes arguments the Jews have made of his gospel by defending the Sovereignty and Righteousness of God against man's pride in his outward righteousness and the foolish arguments they make by distorting his gospel
2. 3.20 Though men try to justify themselves by reasonings, works or religion Paul concludes that **God is Always Right** when He declares no man is justified “**in His sight**”

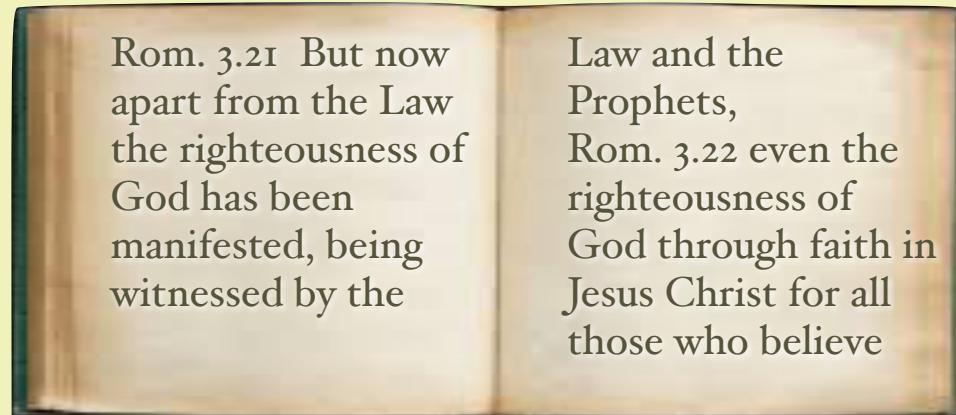
Romans Theme: The Gospel reveals the Righteousness of God



IV. Rom 3.21-31 - The Gospel is now a third NEW revelation of the Righteousness of God

- A. Rom 1-3 has revealed a Righteous God:
 - 1. He is ALL Right (in Himself)
 - 2. He is ALWAYS Right (in His judgments)
 - 3. He ALWAYS does things right (according to a perfect purpose)

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B. Rom 3.21-31 The gospel now reveals the full scope of the Righteous God in Christ:

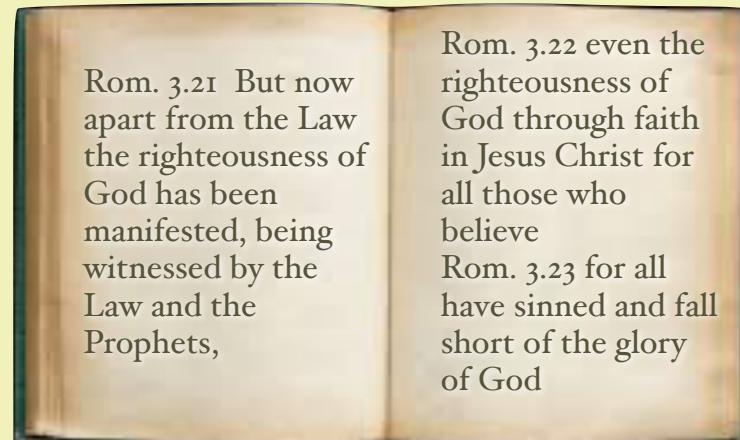
i. He CAN MAKE all things Right

a. Broken humanity can be saved/healed

b. Bound Creation will be liberated

c. God's Righteousness will be Vindicated

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- C. This new way of making sinners righteous is built upon a solid foundation
 - 1. *Rom 3.21* A New Covenant was inaugurated by the blood of Jesus which first fulfilled and then superseded the former righteousness of the LAW
 - 2. *Rom 3.21* this new way “*apart from the law*” was predicted in the Law and the Prophets (*Gen.15.6; Deut 30.11-14; Isa.46.13; Jer. 31.31-34*)
 - 3. *Rom 3.22* This new way of righteousness comes through **faith** in Christ
 - 4. *Rom 3.23* But the gospel must first bring **all men** to the same impartial ground as **sinners**: “*For there is no distinction*” 3.22
 - 5. *Rom.3.23* we see sin is greater than just doing unrighteous things because we are also “**missing the mark**” of God’s **glorious** purpose for man

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IV. Rom 3.21-31 - The Gospel is a NEW revelation of the Righteousness of God

D. *Rom.3.24-25* God cannot ‘just forgive’ because he loves- that would be unrighteous

- Paul reveals there is a **three-fold foundation** beneath Christ’s death that **justifies** God’s **righteousness and our salvation**

i. Jesus’ death on the Cross provides a Legal foundation for our Forgiveness

Rom 3.24a we are ‘**justified** freely’ by His grace (“justified” = “made righteous” in Gk.)

- a. “Justified” is a legal courtroom term for ‘acquitted’, ‘not guilty’, ‘pardoned’
- b. Justice demands that one who sins must die: Christ on the **cross paid our debt**
- c. Though we were sinners by faith we now know we are **forgiven and our guilt is gone** because the “perfect, righteous One” **died on the cross in our place**
- d. Faith believes that the Righteousness of Jesus Christ has been “imputed” (placed upon) to us by His death and that “**in Christ**” we have been made righteous
- e. God has “**made things right**” for us through Christ’s dying for our sins

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2nd Foundation is Redemption leading to Freedom from Slavery to sin:

Rom 3:24b Two-fold **redemption** of a believer

- a. 1st ‘**redeemed**’ means to “**buy back**” and in Greek was a term used mostly in the Roman slave market when a slave’s freedom was ‘**bought**’ by someone
 - i. Once owned by Satan as “**slaves under sin**” we are ‘**bought back**’ by our original Creator and owner who broke our chains of death as **we experience freedom**
 - ii. Now bought with the “**price of Jesus’ blood**” we are no longer our own (*1Cor. 6:19*) but are God’s child to love the Father and serve him as his sons and daughters
- b. 2nd meaning is to “**be restored**” from slavery (lit. in Gk = ‘loose’, ‘untie’) with a new **Hope** of no longer falling short of our future eternal purpose and glory which will be realized with the “**redemption of our bodies**” in the coming resurrection (*Rom.8:23*)

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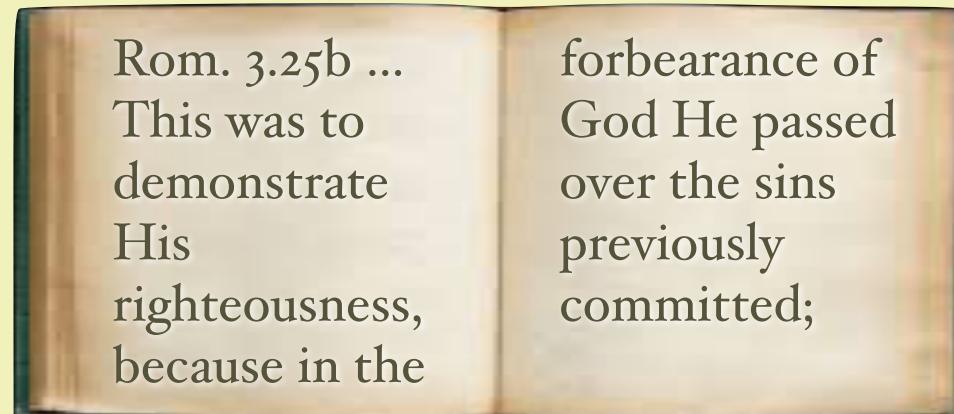
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3rd - Religious foundation: Atonement guarantees our Peace with God *Rom.5.1:*
Rom 3.25a - when we believe "*the blood upon the mercy seat*" is for us it means our **relationship with God** has been **restored**

- a. word '*propitiation*' here in Gk 'hilasterion' = literally the "**cover**" of the '**mercy seat**' where the blood was sprinkled to cover sins on Yom Kippur ("day of covering")
- b. **Priestly picture:** for a Jew the most important day of the year when the blood was sprinkled upon the mercy seat and they were **forgiven** and **reconciled** to God because their sins were "**covered**"
- c. by faith in Christ a believer can boldly **commune** and **worship** under the wings of the Cherubim because the way into the holy of holies has been opened for us by His sprinkled blood **reconciling** and **removing** our sins from us

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IV. Rom 3:21-31 - The Gospel is now a NEW revelation of the Righteousness of God

E. *Rom.3:25-31* Paul's explains how this Justification by faith in Christ Jesus vindicates the Righteous of God which some think contradicts the Law

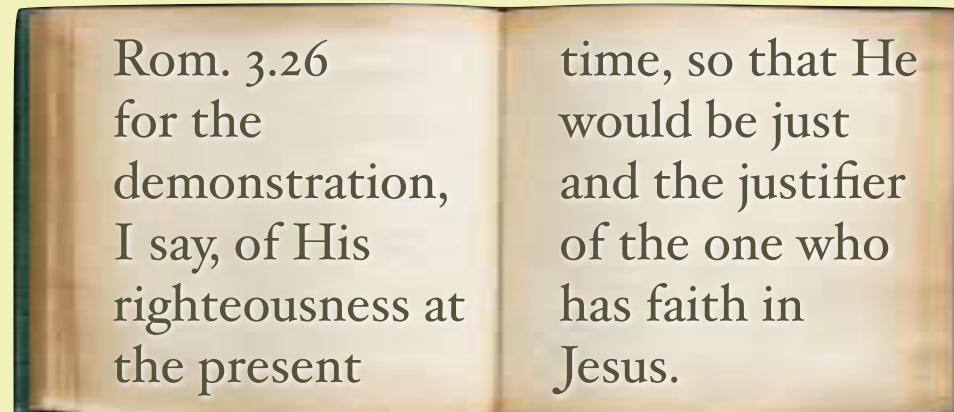
1. Paul now wants to “demonstrate” God’s righteousness, i.e., explain how everything God has done for salvation is **Right**

2. *Rom 3:25b* in his Gospel Paul must first explain why God seemed to “*pass over sins previously committed*” and delay His wrath and judgment upon mankind

a. Mystery among men why a Righteous God who should demand immediate judgment has not done so

b. Now it can be explained: God knowing that His provision of righteousness was yet to be given to man through Jesus withheld His wrath

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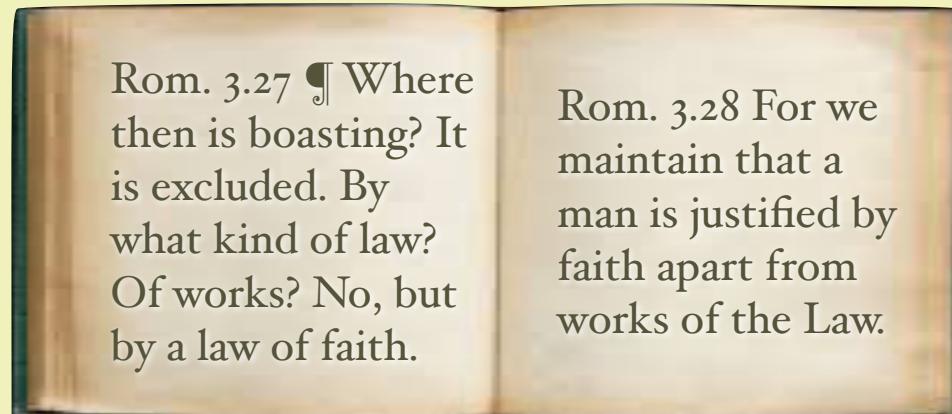
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2. *Rom 3:26* His Righteous Son's death enabled the Righteous God to both judge sin (Just Judge) and yet forgive the sinner (justifier)

a. Now "at the present time" God can remain impartial in His justice and yet justify all who believe in His Son as their righteousness

b. Only the death of His Son could allow sinners to be justified, redeemed and reconciled while allowing God to be Righteous

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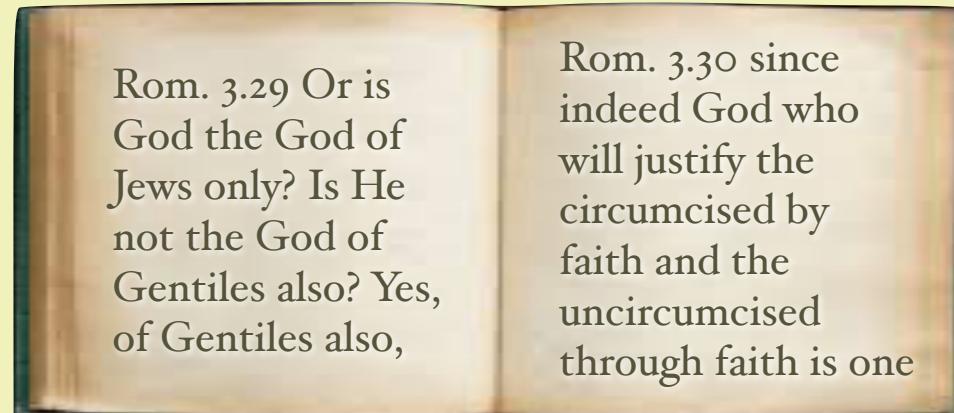
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3. *Rom 3:27-28* This gospel reveals that only God is Righteous and therefore removes any basis of man's boasting in his self righteousness

a. *Rom.3:27* Paul makes a clear distinction between the 'Law of faith' which is now the basis of justification instead of the 'Law of works' by which no flesh can be justified

b. *Rom.3:28* Paul's conclusion: **Salvation comes to man not through the works of the Law but through faith in Christ's righteousness**

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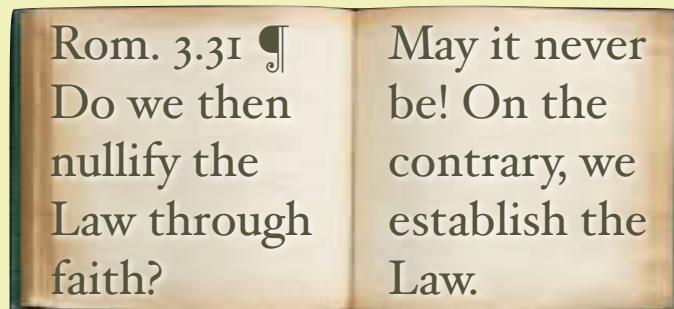
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4. *Rom 3:29-30* Paul finally argues that God's love is too great and His Righteousness too broad to be limited to the jews only

- a. The gospel reveals a God who loves all mankind - whether Jew or Gentile
- b. Circumcision is not the basis of justification
- c. Paul finally uses the Shema of *Deut.6* as to support his argument that there is only One Lord God the Only God who in His great love has justified both Jews and Gentiles through faith in Christ

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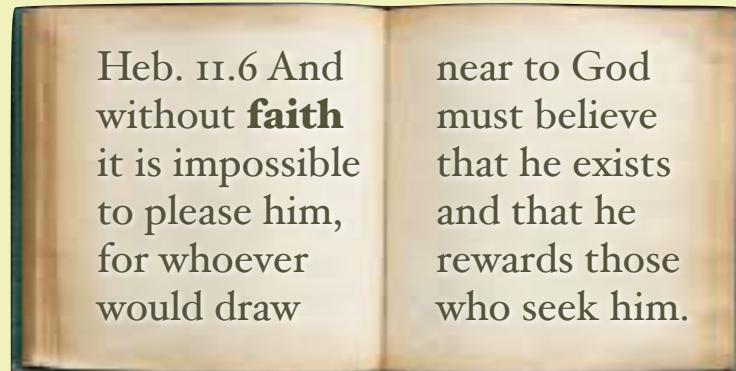
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5. *Rom 3.31* 'Justification by faith in Christ' does not nullify the 'righteousness of the Law' but on the contrary vindicates it

- a. Paul final argument corrects the misunderstanding of many of his opponents who think his gospel rejects the Law of God and replaces it with some illegitimate '*Law of Faith*'
- b. Paul declares that justification by faith establishes the Law in two ways:
 - i. Jesus himself had to perfectly fulfill the requirements of the Law on the cross before He could exchange His fulfilled righteousness with sinners
 - ii. The Gospel completely establishes the validity of the Law as a revelation of God's righteousness and holiness which the Spirit uses to convict men of sin leading to repentance

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IV. Rom 3.21=31 - This Gospel of Righteousness emphasizes **faith**

F. Rom.3.21-31 Faith a key word used **8x** in these **11 verses**

1. 3.22 "...the righteousness of God comes through **faith** in Jesus Christ to all who believe" (by faith we 'see' God's righteousness when we 'see' Jesus)

2. 3.25 "...whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through **faith**". (by faith we 'see' God's mercy upon us by Jesus' sprinkled blood)

3. 3.26 "...the justifier of the one who has **faith** in Jesus". (by faith we 'see' how impartial and fair God's righteousness is when we 'understand' Jesus' death was the only way this could happen)

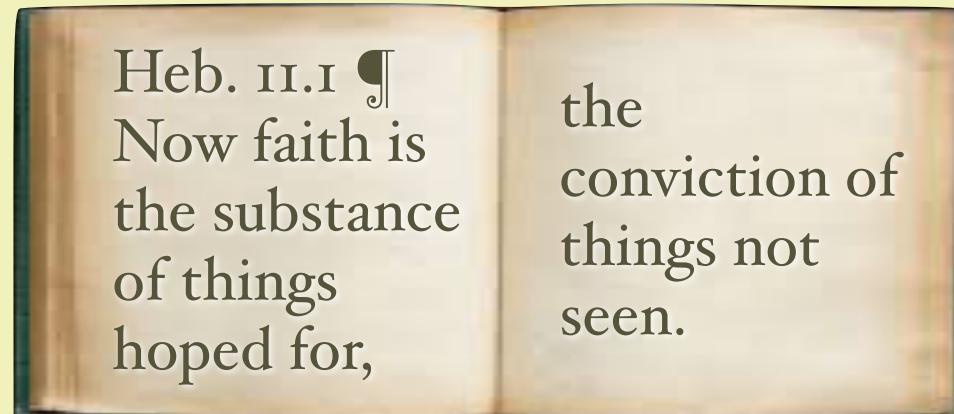
4. 3.27 "... No, but by a law of **faith**." (by faith we realize the only way we could be righteous is by receiving Jesus' righteousness as ours by faith)

5. 3.28 "For we maintain that a man is justified by **faith** apart from works of the Law." (by faith we 'see' our justification comes not by our 'works' but by His)

6&7. 3.30 "...who will justify the circumcised by **faith** and the uncircumcised through that same **faith**" (by faith we 'see' our receiving God's righteousness comes not by outward actions but inner faith)

8. 3.31 "Do we then nullify the Law through **faith**?" (by faith we 'see' that the **Law** is a revelation of who Christ is and of the standard by which our righteousness is measured)

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G. This righteousness which is in Christ is **imputed** to us through faith

1. Faith is not a good work. It does not earn salvation. It does not put God in debt to us. Nevertheless, faith is the essential act connecting the sinner to Jesus Christ as savior.
2. Faith is a gift that comes to us by the Holy Spirit
3. Faith must have substance = a conviction of something true to stand upon
4. Faith discovers its 'substance' as hearing the rema in the Word of God 'quickeneth faith'
5. Faith is an inward conviction that a promise God makes to us is true
6. Faith happens when the **mind's** belief quickens our **heart's** decisions, emotions and actions (will)
7. Faith is sealed as we actively move toward God and our spirit bears witness