

## #16 - Romans 3:21-26 (Part 1)

Context: The Need for Righteousness (1:18-3:20)

### BUT NOW...

- See also Eph. 2:13; Col. 1:22; 1 Cor. 15:20; Tit. 3:4
- “There are no more wonderful words in the whole of Scripture than just these two words ‘But now.’” - Martin Lloyd-Jones
- “As ‘the wrath of God’ dominated the old era (1:18), so ‘the righteousness of God’ dominates the new.” - Moo, p. 222

Summary:

“Paul is now prepared to explain how the righteousness of God—his eschatological justifying activity—empowers the gospel to mediate salvation to sinful human beings.” - Douglas Moo, p. 219

I. **OT Connection:** The Law (Torah) is a witness, not a means, to righteousness (v. 21)

- Listen Back: Session on Roman 1:17
  - Righteousness of God
    - An Attribute of God
    - A Status given by God
    - An Activity of God
- The Law bears witness:
  - Explains to us God’s Righteous Requirements
  - Exposes our need for an “alien righteousness.” A righteousness outside of ourselves.
- God has manifested His righteousness AND made it accessible.
  - The righteousness of God “under the law condemns us.
  - The righteousness of God “apart from the law” (in Christ) makes redemption accessible.

II. **Means:** Faith in Jesus is the means to God’s righteousness for all (v. 22-23)

- Reality: All have sinned!
  - The essence of sin is that it is an affront to the glory of God. Our sin is a futile attempt to usurp glory from God.
    - *I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols. (Is. 42:8)*
    - *For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it, for how should my name be*

*profaned? My glory I will not give to another. (Is. 48:11)*

- Inclusivity: Anyone can get on this!
  - Immanuel Mantra:
    - I'm a complete idiot
    - My future is incredibly bright
    - Anyone can get in on this
- Exclusivity: Only by Faith Alone!
  - Trust in, total reliance upon God. (Hints of "allegiance": Listen to Session on Rom. 1:17)
  - "The empty hands of faith." - Ray Ortlund Jr.

III. **Source:** Because of Jesus' work, man can be justified (v. 24-25a)

#### Justification

- Forensic, Legal term meaning "to be declared righteous" or "in the right."
- Two options on Judgment Day:
  - Will we be found righteous and receive eternal life?
  - Will we be found sinners and receive eternal condemnation?
  - This is the most important issue for our [eternal] lives!
    - Life is not cyclical. There is direction to history. All of humanity is headed to Judgment Day.
    - Reformed scheme: *simil iustus et peccator* ("at the same time both justified and sinner")

#### By Grace

- "God has acted in Christ: unconstrained by anything beyond his own will." - Moo, 228
- It's a gift!
  - Paul is focusing on the "singularity" of grace (meaning "the giver's sole and exclusive mode of operation is benevolence or goodness" ) and the "incongruity" of grace (meaning "without regard to the worth of the recipient") - (John Barclay, *Paul & The Gift*, p. 71, 73)
    - "God's action in Christ is no calibrated reward for the godly, or merciful protection of the faithful few, but a gift of utter incongruity, showing no correspondence with the worth of its recipients." - John Barclay, p. 474

#### Through Redemption

- **Redemption:** "In the Greco-Roman context, redemption pertained to the manumission of slaves and the repatriation of prisoners of war when an appropriate price was paid. This underscores that redemption meant freedom from slavery and

salvation from death. Importantly, in the Christian scheme, slaves contribute nothing to their redemption. The price is paid by another, not by the enslaved....What redemption shows is the costliness of human salvation and that Jesus sets human beings free at the expense of his own life. A modern analogy is that of a hostage situation, where the negotiator takes the place of the innocent hostages.” - Michael Bird, p. 553, 555

- "That is in Christ Jesus"
  - Grace, Redemption, Salvation, etc. everything comes back to Person and Work of Jesus! (cf. 1 Cor. 2:2)
  - We cannot ever let theology become abstract by forgetting that all good things come from and through Jesus Christ.