

#17 - Romans 3:21-26 (Part 2)

Review:

- I. **OT Connection:** The Law (Torah) is a witness, not a means, to righteousness (v. 21)
- II. **Means:** Faith in Jesus is the means to God's righteousness for all (v. 22-23)
- III. **Source:** Because of Jesus' redemptive work, man can be justified (v. 24-25a)

Romans 3:21-26 (Part 2)

"Whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood"

- Hilasterion - this word refers to the atoning sacrifice of Jesus that satisfies the wrath of God against our sin, hence the translation "propitiation."
- Theological: This statement refers to us a classic question: Why Did Jesus Have to Die?
 - Anselm:
 - It is necessary that God punishes sin, let he be unjust.
 - "Compassion [without atonement or 'satisfaction'] on the part of God is wholly contrary to the divine justice, which allows nothing but punishment as the recompense of sin. Therefore, as God cannot be inconsistent with himself, his compassion cannot be of this nature."
 - Fleming Rutledge explains his point: "A society of impunity is intolerable...Compassion alone will not make right what is wrong. It will not rectify the horrors perpetrated over the ages."
 - God alone can supply the justice, man alone can suffer the consequences.
 - Fleming Rutledge: We can identify the center of Anselm's logic in 2.6. Here, he urges that the weight of sin is so great that there is no possibility of atonement or satisfaction unless the price paid is "greater than all the universe besides God."
 - Boso: So it appears...
 - Anselm: Therefore none but God is able to make this satisfaction.
 - Boso: I cannot deny it.
 - Anselm: But none but a man ought to do this [he has already established that it is the guilty party, and no one else, who ought to make the restitution.]
 - Boso: Nothing could be more just.
 - Anselm: If it be necessary, therefore...that [salvation] cannot be effected unless the aforesaid satisfaction be made, which none but God can make and none but man ought to make, it is necessary for the God-man to make it.
 - Boso: Now blessed be God! We have made a great discovery.
- Penal-Substitution Atonement Theory

- “Evangelical Christians believe that in and through Christ crucified God substituted himself for us and bore our sins, dying in our place the death we deserved to die, in order that we might be restored to his favor and adopted into his family.” - John Stott

“To be received by faith”

- “Faith is a living and unshakable confidence, a belief in the grace of God, so assured that a man would die a thousand deaths for its sake...[It] makes us joyful...Hence the man of faith...willingly and gladly seeks to do good to everyone, serve everyone.” - Martin Luther (quoted in Thiselton, p. 105)
- We stake our lives on this belief in the necessity, sufficiency and effectiveness of Christ’s death on a cross in our place!

“This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.”

IV. Character: God has been righteous in his delay of judgment (v. 25b)

- What about OT believers?
 - "The sins 'committed beforehand' will not, then, be sins committed before conversion, or baptism, but before the new age of salvation...God ‘postponed’ the fully penalty due sins in the Old Covenant, allowing sinners to stand before him without their having provided an adequate ‘satisfaction’ of the demands of his holy justice (cf. Heb. 10:4).” - Moo, 240
- Remember Ex. 34:5-7
 - *The LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”*
- Why does God withhold his return and reconciliation of all things in heaven and on earth?
 - *2 Pet. 3:8ff - But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance...*

V. Conclusion: God is Just EVEN IN Justifying those who “believe” (v. 26)

- The wonder of the cross is that in the very same stroke it satisfies both the love of

God and the justice of God. At the very same moment it shows us that God is both the Judge, who cares enough about his world to set standards and hold us accountable to them; and the Justifier, who has done everything necessary to forgive and restore us. He is a Father worth having, and he is a Father we can have. The cross is where, gloriously and liberatingly, we see that he is “just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus” (Romans 3:26). - Tim Keller