

Rom 206 - **The Only Way ! - Rom 3:21-31**

Thru the last 4 Msg's - We have been **CONVICTED** of our sin
& now we Stand in Silence before God - GUILTY

For **FOUR** grueling Msg's
we have been Convicted by God's Law

We have seen Clearly - & Repeatedly

In our **Nature**

In our **Actions** - &

Even in our **Religious Efforts** - - WE ARE LOST IN SIN !

In ourselves - We have **NO WAY** to be made **RIGHT** with God

& we **MUST** come to the place where we stand **SILENT** before GOD
Guilty of our sin - with **NO** Excuse - & **NO** Way Out

Has that happened to you yet?

Have **you** reached that place

where **you** have nothing of yourself to bring God

Has **God's Righteous Law** Proven to you
that you are a Sinner, By Nature & By Choice

& that **all your own efforts** to be made Right with God
are totally useless & worthless?

The **PURPOSE** of God's Law

is to leave us **Speechless** before the Throne of the Eternal Judge

Because only when we come to the **end** of ourselves

are we **fully ready** - to receive the ONLY WAY
for sinners - to be made RIGHT with God

There is Only ONE WAY - It is the ONLY WAY

& if you will accept the truth - that there is NO WAY for YOU
to make yourself RIGHT w/ God

THEN you will be READY to receive the ONLY WAY,
for us to be made right with God

Our text today - is Absolutely Incredible
it is one of the KEY CENTRAL TEXTS in All the NT

Donald Barnhouse (Great Preacher & Scholar):

*"I am convinced today, after these many years of Bible study, that
these verses are the most important in the Bible."*

Now THAT - is a HUGE statement - by a Great Commentator

Then Barnhouse goes on to write 193 pages
on THIS TEXT - *that I have 45 minutes to cover*

Today - as Paul begins the 2nd section of Romans
he lays out for us - THE VERY CORE concepts of Salvation

The 1st section of Romans was devoted to - "Man's Sinfulness"
The 2nd section (*beginning here*) is devoted to - "God's Solution"

Let's Pray

There are **4 Key Concepts** in this Text
that deserve a Lifetime of Study & Embracing

Here they are - **the 4 Key Concepts** for our Salvation;
Righteousness - Justification - Redemption - Propitiation

if you've **been a Christian** for a while
you've heard these words

But if you are not in total **AWE & WONDER** of these incredible truths -
then they deserve your careful attention

Let's start - before even reading this text,
with **simple definitions** of the 4 KEY concepts found here

1) Righteousness

Most simply = **Free from sin** (Lit - without sin)
it is the absolute state of being 'Right'

In **Original Character** - or Original State of Being
ONLY God is Truly Righteous (*we established that in Rom 3:10*)
There are none righteousness, no not one

This **ISN'T** what we would call **MAN'S** Righteousness
where we try hard to do our best for God

This is the Righteousness that God EXISTS AS (LIT - Without Sin)

2) Justification (a legal term)

Most simply = **To be Declared Righteous**
it is crediting to the believer, God's Own Righteousness

Maybe you've heard the "play on words"
Just as if I'd never sinned - Which isn't too far off

But more LIT - It is **IMPARTING** to the Believer
The Righteousness that God **EXISTS AS**

3) Redemption

Most simply = **Purchasing back (by ransom) that which was lost**

It is the **payment of a Ransom** which satisfies a debt
the full & complete **Penalty** required to purchase back - **A Slave**

4) Propitiation (also a legal term)

Most simply = **An acceptable payment to remove Guilt**

Incredibly - this is the same **GK word** used in the **Septuagint**
for the "**Mercy Seat**" which covered the Ark of the Covenant

& it was **upon the Mercy Seat**, blood was sprinkled - on the
'Day of Atonement' to **'Cover Over'** or **Atone** for the people's sin

Propitiation is - **An Atoning Sacrifice** - acceptable to **remove Guilt**

In these **Four** incredible **Concepts**

we have the **Absolute**, **Miraculous**, **ONLY WAY**
for us to **be made Right** with God

Righteousness - *Being Free from Sin*

Justification - *To be Declared Righteous*

Redemption - *Purchasing back (by ransom) that which was lost*

Propitiation - *Acceptable payment to remove guilt*

Now - Many Modern Translations (inclgd NLT) don't use these words because their definitions are not readily known

However - *in regard to our Salvation - these 4 words (& concepts)* are the most Comforting & Confident & Powerful words *in all the Bible*

So - Don't Avoid them - Embrace them
Make sure you understand them
Build your relationship w/ the Lord on them

AND - add to them One Other Miraculous Word
the Word by Which ALL these Truths come to US

Add to them - the Word - - GRACE

Because it is ONLY by God's Amazing Grace
that these 4 words can ever be applied to US

GRACE = *Unmerited, Undeserved Favor*

Grace is God giving to you - what you CANNOT,
& WILL NOT ever - Merit, or Deserve

NOW - - Only Now - - are we ready to hear
God's Incredible, ONLY WAY to our Salvation

Rom 3:21 - ESV

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

But now the righteousness of God [being free from sin] has been manifested [shown to us] apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it

The Righteousness of God was 1st shown **IN the law**
but in the law - God's Righteousness only served to condemn us
because we could NEVER attain to it

so **NOW** - The Righteousness of God has been shown to us
APART from the law . . .

Guys - We **MUST** understand - The Righteousness of God is **NOT**
Being Real Good at following MOST of the Law,
THAT'S Man's Righteousness

God's Righteousness is Being WITHOUT SIN - **PERIOD**

The **ONLY** earthly display of God's Righteousness
was in the Person of **Jesus Christ**

& as **Paul continues** to define the Righteousness of God
He describes it as coming - **Thru faith in Jesus Christ**

Rom 3:22 - ESV

22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. . . .

The NIV makes this Vs clear - V.22 - NIV

22 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. . .

The Righteousness of God (being free from sin)
that has been shown to us **APART** from the law

is the Righteousness of God that can **only** be received,
THRU faith in Jesus Christ - for all who believe

& **the Holy Spirit** emphasizes the **ALL** - in the "all who believe"
at the end of **V.22** & connecting with - the **FAMOUS Vs.23**

Rom 3:22-23 - ESV

**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,**

Romans has already proven (beyond any doubt)
that **ALL** have sinned, and **ALL fall short** of the glory of God

But **the focus here** is now actually changing to;
the **ONLY WAY** for **ALL** to be made RIGHT with God

& so the "**ALL have sinned**" thought
flows right into the **MAIN Context** in **Vs.24**

Let's TIP-TOE into Vs.24 - by reading again from V.23

Rom 3:23-24A - ESV

*23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
24 and are justified . . . [stop right there]*

The focus is on the ALL

All have sinned in the SAME WAY . . .

AND - ALL *that Will be* Justified - Will be Justified the Same Way

Let's read Vs's 23-24 together - ESV

*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,*

There are THREE Monumental Words in Vs.24

Justified = To be Declared Righteous

Grace = Unmerited, Undeserved Favor (A Gift from God)

Redemption = To be Purchased Back by Ransom

So - all have sinned

& all that will be Justified (*be Declared Righteous*)

will be declared righteous in this manner . . .

BY God's Grace - THRU the Redemption - That is IN Christ Jesus

*The only way for us to be Declared Righteous before God,
is by us Receiving His unmerited gift,
of the payment of our Ransom - by Jesus Christ,*

That is the ONLY WAY - for us to be made right with God

It's so **clear** - it's so **powerful**,
but the Holy Spirit's *not done yet*

Let's read **V.24** - & the **1st half of V.25**

Rom 3:24 - 25A - ESV

24 and [we] are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,
25 whom God put forward as a propitiation [atoning sacrifice] by his blood, to be received by faith. . .

In **Grand Theology** - This is like **SHOCK & AWE**
One Bomb Shell coming right after another

Justification - Grace - Redemption - Propitiation - Faith . . .
ALL IN Just TWO Vs's

We are **Declared Righteous** (*Justified*)
by God's **Unmerited Gift** (*His Grace*)
of the **Ransom** paid by Jesus Christ (*redemption*)
which is a **Propitiation** (*Atoning sacrifice*)
to be received by **FAITH** !!!!

BAAM - BAAM - BAAM !!! - The Bombshells fall on
ALL of man's **Self-Righteous**, **Self-Made**, **Religious** Efforts

This is an **incredible display**
of God's **ONLY WAY** - to remedy - our sinful condition

We are Declared Righteous
By God's Unmerited Gift
Thru the ransom paid by Jesus Christ
Which is the Atoning Sacrifice that fully pays for our sin - By HIS Blood
*And we Receive it - **BY Faith** ! (& by faith alone)*

THAT - is **THE ONLY WAY** - for us to be made right with God

Well - if **THAT** is the **ONLY WAY** of Salvation
then what about the O.T. Saints ?? (*I'm glad you asked*)

Now Paul is going to **CONNECT** - Salvation in the Old Testament
WITH Salvation in the New Testament

& show that **ALL** salvation is found - in the **SAME WAY**,
By FAITH in God's Plan of Salvation

Let's re-Read **Vs.25**

Rom 3:25 - ESV

25 [Jesus Christ (*from v.24*)] ***whom God put forward as a propitiation***
[Atoning Sacrifice] ***by his blood, to be received by faith. This*** [this
sacrifice] ***was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine***
forbearance he had passed over former sins.

Divine Forbearance means - God "Refrained from Judgment"
when He "passed over" the sins of the **O.T. Believers**

Look at the way the **NLT** puts it - in the 2nd half of V.25

Rom 3:25B - NLT

***25 . . . This sacrifice shows that God was being fair when he
held back and did not punish those who sinned in times past,***

HOW ?? - - *How was God being fair ??*

Because salvation in the O.T.
came **THE SAME WAY** it comes to us today
THRU FAITH in God's Plan of Salvation

The O.T. Believers were "looking ahead in Faith"
to God's Plan of salvation

Just as we Look BACK in FAITH - to God's Plan of salvation

Here's how it works - - - We know that Righteousness was
BY FAITH - all the way back to Abraham

Gen 15:6 - ESV

6 And he [Abraham] *believed the Lord, and he [God] counted it to him as righteousness.*

& then - in the Hall of Fame of Faith - Heb 11 - we read

Heb 11:13 - ESV

13 *These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, . . .*

The O.T. Believers looked FORWARD by Faith - to the Cross
Just as We look BACKWARD by Faith - to the Cross

In fact - the NLT puts a "comma" between V.25 & V.26
to show this connection as one sentence . . .

Rom 3:25B-26A - NLT

25 . . . *This sacrifice shows that God was being fair when he held back and did not punish those who sinned in times past,[comma]*
26 *for he was looking ahead and including them in what he would do in this present time. . . .*

& because of this - as Rom 3:25 says
God's Righteousness is UPHELD

when He "Passed Over" the sins of the O.T. Believers

it is AT the Cross (for BOTH OT & NT Believers) that God proves

that He is Perfectly JUST - AND the perfect JUSTIFIER
of ALL who put their Faith in Jesus Christ

Let's read again - Rom 3:26 - ESV

26 It [this plan of salvation] was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

God is perfectly JUST - in His ONLY WAY of Salvation

& He perfectly JUSTIFIES ALL who receive
His ONLY WAY of Salvation

By putting their FAITH in Jesus Christ

OK - Let's Review - IN REVERSE;

Jesus Christ is our Propitiation (*Acceptable payment to remove guilt*)

By His sacrifice - He Purchased us back from sin (Redeemed Us)

When we put our Faith in Christ - God IMPARTS the Righteousness
of Christ - to US - Declaring us Righteous (Justification)

Then, When God looks at us - He sees the Righteousness of His Son
Making us RIGHT with God

That doesn't leave us much room
to BOAST in our own righteousness - does it?

Rom 3:27 - ESV → →

Rom 3:27 - ESV

27 Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith.

We **KNOW** that the "Law of Works" actually Produces **BOASTING**
& **THAT** is what **MUST** be Excluded

Which is **Exactly** what the "Law of Faith" does
It **EXCLUDES ALL** boasting in our own Righteousness

& **THAT** - is the **Grand Theme** of the Book of ROMANS -
that we are **Justified BY FAITH ALONE** - apart from our works

Some say **Paul** wrote **Galatians** as a "Primer" to Romans . . .

& in **Gal 2:16** we read - **NLT**

16 Yet we know that a person is made right with God by faith in Jesus Christ, not by obeying the law. And we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we might be made right with God because of our faith in Christ, not because we have obeyed the law. For no one will ever be made right with God by obeying the law.

& **THAT** - is exactly what our **next Vs** in **Rom Ch 3** says . . .

Rom 3:28 - ESV

28 For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

& it is **THAT** theme - Paul's going to "Expand" for most of Romans

That we can **ONLY** be Declared Righteous before God
by God **IMPARTING** the Righteousness of Christ to us

& that can **ONLY** be done - **THRU FAITH IN CHRIST ALONE**

& now - in Vs's 29 & 30

Paul's going to go back - to the "ALL" theme

Since God Justifies (*Declares Righteous*) by Faith Alone
then HOW could He be the God of the Jews ONLY ??

Rom 3:29-30 - ESV

**29 Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also,
30 since God is one. He will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.**

Faith - is the Conduit - by which we ACQUIRE
this Miraculous Salvation from God (*it is THRU faith*)

& since it is thru Faith - then it's the same for Jews & Gentiles
***He will justify the circumcised (Jews) by faith
and the uncircumcised (Gentiles) through faith.***

But then - does that mean that Faith has Overthrown the Law ?
Absolutely NOT

In fact - Faith doesn't Overthrow the Law
it actually Upholds (or fulfills) the Law

Rom 3:31 - ESV

**31 Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means!
On the contrary, we uphold the law.**

The law spells out God's Requirement for Righteousness
(*Meaning to be free from sin*)

AND the Law proves - *beyond a shadow of doubt*,
that we CANNOT meet that Requirement on our own

But **Justification** means that God Declares us Righteous
by **IMPARTING** the Righteousness of Christ - to us

HOW? - Thru **Redemption** - which means
Purchasing back (by Ransom) that which was lost

& **HOW** can God Declare us Righteous by Christ Paying a Ransom?

Because of **Propitiation** - which means
an acceptable payment to remove guilt -

& **ONLY** the sacrifice of Jesus Christ could ever be
an "Acceptable Payment" to remove the Guilt of our sin

& **HOW** do we **ACQUIRE** that acceptable payment
for the **Removal** of our Guilt?

THRU our **FAITH** in Jesus Christ

& by us placing our Faith in Jesus Christ
HIS Righteousness is **imparted** to us

Which Perfectly Upholds (Fulfills) the Law of God

SO - Being Justified Thru Faith in Christ
does not Set Aside the Law

but instead - It **Perfectly Fulfills** the Law

& **THAT**, my friends, is **HOW** God can be both
Perfectly **JUST** - & the Perfect **JUSTIFIER**

of **ALL** who put their faith in Christ

& **at the end** of all that - we should be left in **AWE** & **AMAZEMENT**
at the **ONLY WAY** - that we can **be made Right** before God

In closing - let me give you **one WARNING**

Faith is Far from the mere "Acknowledgement" that God exists

Jas 2:19-20 - NLT

19 You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! Even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror.

20 How foolish! Can't you see that faith without good deeds is useless?

A few weeks ago - **Pastor Jeff** said

"True Repentance leads to a Changed Life"

& I can assure you - just as well - "True Faith leads to a Changed Life"

What **James** is saying is - **True Faith** - **WORKS**

It works to change your life

& we will see **PLENTY** of that truth

as we continue to study in **Romans**

Continued . . .

What a **Wonderful** - Incredible - **Miraculous** *Explanation*
of **HOW** God Makes us Righteous

while always maintaining **His** Perfect Righteousness

God's Word has Clearly Spelled out
the **ONLY WAY** of Salvation

There can be **No Other Way**
Because there is **No Other** Jesus Christ

There is ONLY ONE Son of God

Who is the ONLY One Who could be the acceptable sacrifice

To Redeem us from our sin,
& to **Impart** to us the *Righteousness of God*

Without which, we could never enter into *God's Presence*

Don't be fooled into thinking
there could some other way **to be Made Right** with God

Placing your *Full & Complete Faith* in Jesus Christ -
is the **ONLY WAY** - that we can be **saved** from our sin

Rom 1:17 – NIV – *“for in the Gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: The righteous shall live by faith”*

Let's Pray