

“Alien Righteousness”
(Romans 3:21-31 and Romans 4)

The Metaphor for Romans 1-4

The 1st son is all **Gentiles**. That’s **us**. (Romans 1:18-32 and 3:1-20)

The 2nd son is all **Jews**. (Romans 2 and 3:1-20)

The father is **Abraham**. (Romans 4:1-25).

Romans 3:21-25a (Romans 1:1-17 Revisited)

Such a Father’s Day table of perfect peace is only possible by **alien righteousness**, not works.

Further Proof of Salvation by Alien Righteousness

Proof #1: Romans 3:25b-26

Grace is the only explanation of why everyone before Christ was NOT stricken down in judgment immediately and why even now, sinners without Christ live.

Proof #2: Romans 3:27-28

*If we were saved by works at all, heaven would be full of **arrogant** people.*

*Since we are saved by alien righteousness, heaven is filled with **humble** people.*

Proof # 3: Romans 3:29-30 “To the Jews”(Romans 3:20)

*The purpose of the law was always to show our **desperate need** for alien righteousness. It was never meant to promote salvation by our own works which is impossible.*

Proof # 4: Romans 3:31

*Only salvation by **faith** can enable people to fall in love with the law. Salvation by works can only engender pride or fear in the heart. Neither of these attitudes is what God wants regarding his law.*

Points To Ponder

1. The truth that we are saved by Christ's work alone, alien righteousness, is naturally foreign to us. It's a message that God must reveal to us and which he must continue to repeat and convince us of throughout our lives. What are faith disciplines you can adopt – faith habits – so as to always let this good news dominate your life?
2. Our natural sense is that we must save ourselves. Theologians call this the “opinio legis” (our opinion of the law – we think we can keep it to win God's favor!) As you consider your life, how often do you sense you base your worth off of what you do? How many relationships are based on what others do for you? How does consciously remembering Christ's alien righteousness address our need to make something of ourselves? How does his righteousness also affect all our relationships which otherwise are all works based?
3. If you were, God-forbid, to die tonight, what would you say to God, should he ask, “Why should I allow you into my heaven?” (If you say, “Because I tried my best” or, “I'm a pretty good person,” read Romans and listen to this sermon one more time.) So, what would your answer be? (Reread Romans 3:21-25.)
4. Based on Romans 3-4, what's wrong with the following common statements: 1) You should keep the commands because it's the right thing to do. 2) Don't be so uptight about it. It's no big deal, besides God will forgive you. 3) For a eulogy, someone says, “He was a good man.” Do you sense the works vs. grace mentality in these thoughts or a despising of grace?

Homework: Romans 5:1-21