

All Fall Short 5

But Jesus Is Enough

Romans 3:21-31

Memory Verses: Romans 3:21

ELEMENTS

Introduction (Me, We, & the Struggle)

One night in the 1930s, the famous Mayor LaGuardia decided to preside over a night court in one of the city's poorest neighborhoods. A woman was brought before him for stealing. She was a thief and the evidence proved it. She pleaded guilty. And then the Mayor asked her... what's going on that you needed to steal. She told him about how her daughter's husband had abandoned the family. How her daughter had become very sick and how her grandchildren were starving. The Mayor looked at her and said... now that is all very touching, but the law is clear. You're theft either requires a fine or jail time. No exceptions... it's either 10 dollars or ten days in jail! The woman, in tears said, "i don't have 10 dollars." Then Mayor LaGuardia reached into his own pocket and pulled out 10 dollars and paid the fine himself. He then took up a collection in the courthouse for the woman and her family and they gave the woman over \$47 dollars. Justice was upheld, the law was not ignored, the fine was paid! But the mercy came from the very seat of judgment!

For the last four weeks we've been told over and over again that we have fallen short of the glory of God! We are not and never will be enough to save ourselves. We can't be good enough, moral enough, religious enough, or righteous enough. When we get to **Romans 3:20** we are left silent, guilty, without hope and unable to justify ourselves. And then in **Romans 3:21** Paul writes... "But now the righteousness of God has been manifested." "But now."

Those might be the two most beautiful words in the Bible. He doesn't say, "but try harder," or "but do better," or "but be more sincere," or "but go to church more." He says, "but now... God." When we were destitute... under the judgment of a Holy God... God himself stepped down from his throne in heaven and manifested himself as a man and paid our fine himself. God has done what we could not do! When we couldn't... God could! When we were worthless in our sin he made us righteous in Him. We were dead in our sins and trespasses, we were helplessly and hopelessly condemned. We could never be enough, we could never do enough... but! But Jesus paid it all! Jesus is enough... and in him...through faith in him...we are saved. The main point this morning is simple... **Though WE have fallen short, HE has made a way!** Today, I want to quickly give you five things Jesus has done to save us!

Teaching (Expand on the Problem, God)

The first thing Jesus has done to save us is... **Jesus has given us his righteous through Justification.** Let's look at **verses 21-24.**

Justification is a grace... a gift! Again, we needed perfection, perfect righteousness to maintain our relationship with God. But we could not be good enough or righteous enough. So God, gave us a gift. He gave us the righteousness we needed... his righteousness.

Justification is courtroom language. It doesn't mean "rehabilitated." It doesn't mean "made better." It means "not guilty." It means declared righteous. It's a contradiction of sorts... a paradox. The crime happened. We are sinful and deserve judgment... and yet we are declared fully righteous. How? Because God has imparted the righteousness of His Son, Jesus Christ to us. How? By exchanging our records.

Think of the courtroom setting... you are declared guilty of your sins and condemned to death. Then Jesus, who has a perfect record and is guilty of nothing says, Judge, if it pleases the court, I will give him my record and I'll take his. And the judge, God, says... that works!

Justification is imputed righteousness. The imputed righteousness of Christ towards sinful humans. So that when we stand before the judgment of God, God doesn't see our sin, he sees the righteousness of Christ. God doesn't see us in our sinful shortcomings... he sees us as if we'd never sinned. **In Christ we are justified... Just if I'd never sinned! Though WE have fallen short, HE has made a way!**

The second thing Jesus has done to save us is... **Jesus has set us free through Redemption.** Let's look at **verses 24** again. Justification is judicial language. Redemption is economic language. It means purchased. It is much like buying back something that you've pawned. You gave it up for a time, but now you are back to claim ownership of it. Or its like paying a ransom. You were taken and enslaved, and someone came to pay what it cost to set you free. Get this... we weren't just guilty of our sins... we were enslaved to our sins. We were incapable of resisting sin. We were unable to escape its clutches. We were mastered by it. Chained to it. And therefore chained to its consequences. We could never pay the cost of our freedom... nor would we want to.

And so Jesus shows up and says, "enough." He didn't negotiate with sin, he didn't bargain with death, he simply paid the price for our freedom. The price? His own blood! The blood of the king of kings and Lord of Lords. The blood of God.

Picture a slave market. A cage filled with dirty, malnourished, skinny, half-dead men and women, ready to be put on the block to be sold to a cruel master. Then someone steps up, pays your full price, and says... you're free.

In **Luke 4:18** Jesus says, I have come to set the captives free. And.. **John 8:36** says, "who the son sets free is free indeed." **Though WE**

have fallen short, HE has made a way!

The third thing Jesus has done to save us is... **Jesus has satisfied God's wrath as our Propitiation**. Look at **verses 25-26**. Justification is judicial language. Redemption is economic language. Propitiation is ritual language. It is the language the Old Testament priests would use for sacrifices in the tabernacle.

In the Old Testament the people would sacrifice animals when they sinned. The sacrifice of a bull or goat or pigeon could temporarily remove the guilt of one's sin. The animal would become a propitiation, a temporary "wrath satisfier" for the sinner.

But there was a big problem. Those sacrifices were, as we said, temporary. They didn't last. And then mankind would sin again and again and again. There just weren't enough animals to sacrifice to cover that much sinfulness... our sinfulness. There needed to be a bigger sacrifice... one that would be so great that it would take away all of the sin for all time. A sacrifice so enormous that it would satisfy the wrath of God for all time!

But what sacrifice could do this? A perfect sacrifice. A worthy sacrifice. A holy sacrifice. The only one that fits this description is God himself. And so that's what he did. He gave his one and only son, that whoever would believe in him would not perish but have eternal life. Get this... **every ounce of God's wrath was poured out on Christ... as he stood in our place!** And as our propitiation, God's wrath was finally satisfied. Imagine a damn holding back millions of gallons of water. The wall is cracking as the pressure builds. The flood will kill everyone in its path. And then someone steps forward and drinks all of the water. That was the cup of God's wrath that Jesus drank on our behalf.

Look at **Isaiah 53:4-6**. Jesus is our sacrificial lamb, our propitiation where God laid the iniquities of us all. **Though WE have fallen short, HE has made a way!**

The fourth thing Jesus has done to save us is this... **Jesus has fulfilled the law for us by Grace through Faith**. Let's look at **verses 27-28, and 31**. Let me make this as simple as possible. The law demanded perfect righteousness. If the law were an exam... we'd all have to get a 100. We didn't... we didn't even come close. But Jesus did. Jesus has scored a 100 on every exam for all time! And he turned his paper in and put your name on it. And now all you have to do is say... I believe Jesus scored a 100 and that it counts for me!

In **Matthew 5:17** Jesus makes it clear that he isn't here to abolish the law or replace the law... he is here to fulfill the law. And you may be like... well it looks an awful lot like he's replacing it and abolishing it... And that's valid... but it's because you don't understand the point of the law.

The law is there to show us what perfection **looks like in theory**. Jesus is here to show us what perfection **is in reality**. The law said to us... do this. Jesus said.. I did it! The law hasn't been lowered... its been fulfilled by grace through faith. Jesus gave us his score – grace. We believe it is sufficient – faith. Law fulfilled!

So now there is no room to brag about our righteousness. That type of religion is done away with. That's what the Pharisees were all about. Hey look at me I got a 62 on my law exam. That's like bragging about failing. Makes no sense. So now instead we simply brag on Jesus! Why? Because he has saved us. He has redeemed us. He has justified us. It is all a gift! Look at **Ephesians 2:8-9**. So where as the law was all about effort. Faith is about belief. And we believe Jesus has made a way for us to keep the law! **Though WE have fallen short, HE has made a way!**

The last thing Jesus has done to save us is this... **Jesus has made us one family through Adoption**. Let's look at **verses 29-30**. There isn't a God of the Jews and a God of everyone else. There isn't a God of the law and a God of grace. There is one God! And anyone who comes to him through faith becomes a part of his one family! Justification is judicial language, redemption is economic language, propitiation is ritual language, but adoption... that's family language! The Gospel of Jesus Christ tears down the walls of superficiality and superiority, of sex and race, of economic status and social classes, of insider and outsider, of religious and sinner.

Galatians 3:26 tells us that we are all children of God through faith. Look at **Ephesians 1:5 and John 1:12**. We are meant to be one family under one father. **The King of the universe wants you to be their adopted child and heir.**

Imagine you are a child sitting in foster care, mistreated by your foster parents, believing you are unwanted and forgotten. Then one day a couple walks in, signs the papers, kneels, and say, "You're mine." That's what Jesus has done! **Though WE have fallen short, HE has made a way!**

Application

You have fallen short. You were found guilty in the courtroom. You were enslaved, bound in chains. You were condemned, targeted by God's wrath. You were unable to live up to the demands of the law. You were an orphan, alone and forgotten in this world! But now! Jesus has declared you righteous before the judge and you've been found not guilty. Jesus paid your ransom and set you free from the chains of sin. Jesus has drank the cup of God's judgment and appeased his wrath. Jesus has fulfilled the law on your behalf. And Jesus has adopted you and made you a part of his family! **Though WE have fallen short, HE has made a way!** Though we could never be enough, or do enough, Jesus is enough!

Conclusion

So here's the question. Why are you still trying to save yourself? Why are you still trying to score a 100 on the exam? Why do you think all you need to do is do better, or clean yourself up a little, or get more serious, or fix that one area.... You can't! You can't add to what Jesus has finished! You can't improve on perfect righteousness. You can't pay more than redemption. You can't drink more wrath than Christ. You can't outperform the law. You can't make God love you more. The only thing left to do is receive! Receive the gift of God's grace through faith. Stop striving and simply surrender! Stop trying to do what you could never do and let God do what only he can do. Don't put your faith in religion or morality or effort... put your faith in Christ alone! He is enough! **So pray this simple prayer... Jesus I trust you alone. I trust that you are enough. Be my righteousness. Be my redemption. Be my sacrifice. Be my perfection. Be my father.**