

**TIME OF REFLECTION**

“Reality is too heavy for most people to carry. So they borrow illusions, soft dreams, sweet lies, and call it happiness.”

~Franz Kafka (1883-1924), Jewish Czech writer of German literature, known for his works marked by surreal and bizarre storylines

“The Holy Scriptures were not given to us that we should enclose them in books, but that we should engrave them upon our hearts.”

~John Chrysostom (died 407 AD), church leader in ancient Constantinople

The Letter to the Romans “is the principal and most excellent part of the New Testament. It is the light and way into the whole Scripture. No man can read it too often or study too well.”

~William Tyndale (c.1494-1536), scholar and linguist, considered the father of the English Bible

“This epistle is really the chief part of the New Testament and the very purest gospel and is worthy not only that every Christian should know it word for word by heart, but occupy himself with it every day as the daily bread of the soul. It can never be read or pondered too much.”

~Martin Luther (1483-1546), German reformer, in his commentary on Romans

“Because faith alone justifies... publicans and prostitutes will be first in the kingdom of heaven”

~Hilary of Poitiers (c.310-c.367), Gallic-Roman church leader

“God justifies the believer—not because of the worthiness of his belief, but because of his [Christ’s] worthiness who is believed.”

~Richard Hooker (1554-1600) in his *Ecclesiastical Polity* (1593)

“Of whatever virtue you may declare that the ancient righteous people were possessed, nothing saved them but the belief in the Mediator who shed his blood for the remission of their sins.”

~Augustine (354-430), North African theologian in *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians*

“God’s righteousness compels him...to have to judge the guilty. But then he offers forgiveness and says ‘I will not judge you according to your works.’ So...he sends his Son...so that now when he calls you his own...he has not compromised his righteousness.”

~Jackie Hill Perry, poet, writer, and hip-hop artist

**SERMON** – “The Misunderstood ‘Righteousness of God’: A Rapid Romans Overview”

– Dr. Robert Gagnon

**SERMON PASSAGE** – *Romans 1:16-17 & 3:21-26*

*Romans 1:16-17 (Dr. Robert Gagnon’s translation of the original Greek)*

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for effecting salvation to everyone who is believing it, both to the Jew first and to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is being revealed from faith to faith, just as it is written, “And the righteous one from faith will live.”

*Romans 3:21-26 (Dr. Robert Gagnon’s translation of the original Greek)*

But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been manifested, though it is attested by the law and the prophets; that is, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who

believe. For there is no distinction, for all sinned and are lacking in the glory of God, with the result that they are being justified as a gift by his grace through the redemption that is available in Christ Jesus, whom God set before himself as an amends-making offering by means of his blood, through that faith, for an indicator of his righteousness, because of the letting go of the sins that occurred previously in the time of God’s holding back his wrath, with a view toward that indicator of his righteousness in the ‘now’ time, in order that he himself might be righteous and justifier of the person whose identity is derived from faith in Jesus.