

Open your Bibles to Romans 3:19-28.

- As many of you know, my wife gave birth to our second child last week. And so, I will be taking the month of May off from the pulpit.

- And since I missed last week and this will be my final sermon until June, I've decided to not continue the Respectable Sins series, but instead to preach a stand alone sermon.

- This morning I'll be preaching on the doctrine of Justification by Faith Alone.

Now, why do I want to preach on this doctrine today?

- I have three reasons:

1. First, I need to preach this doctrine for my own good.

- To be transparent, I feel like the Lord has permitted Satan to assault me over the last couple of months about this doctrine.

- In the course of my studies of other doctrines, I came up against a challenging subject. And, studying multiple views of that subject, I began to have a bit of a crisis about whether or not the doctrine of justification by faith alone is true.

- That is kind of embarrassing to say as one of your Elders, but it's the truth.

- And so, I was sent back to the basics to re-study this glorious and biblical, life-giving doctrine.

- And I can't get it out of my head. So I must get it off my chest. I need to preach this doctrine because it has become even more precious to me.

- And I need to have the truth reiterated to me that my right standing with God is all of grace, all of Christ, and received by faith and not by works.

- I need to preach this sermon to myself as much as I need to preach it to you this morning.

2. Second, from time to time some of the members of this congregation come to me expressing doubts about their standing with God.

- And they aren't feeling that way because they have come to embrace a heresy or are living a grossly immoral life or anything like that.

- Rather, they're questioning whether or not they are saved because they see remaining sin in their lives. Because they face the daily reality that they don't perfectly love and obey God. And because they feel like they haven't done enough to be called a Christian.

- And to those of you who feel this way, this sermon is for you.

3. Third, every Christian needs this doctrine beaten into their heads and hearts on a regular basis.

- Brothers and sisters, justification by faith alone is everything.

- And that's because justification by faith alone is justification by CHRIST ALONE.

- This doctrine is everything. It is central to our faith. It is the Gospel itself.

- That we are not made right with God by our works, but solely by the work of Christ given to us by faith alone is the Gospel of God.

- IT IS EVERYTHING. And we must never lose it. For if

we lose it, we lose everything. We lose the Gospel.

- So we must remember and be dedicated to this truth.

The great question for all mankind is this: How can a man made right with God?

- How can a sinner be reconciled to God?
- How can one who has broken God's Law avoid the wrath of God and instead be at peace and have fellowship with the God he has sinned against?
- That's the question.
- And the Word of God declares to us in no uncertain terms: BY FAITH ALONE IN CHRIST ALONE.
- So that is what I intend to preach to you this morning.
- May God have mercy and bless us as we humble ourselves before His Word to hear His Gospel.

If you would, and are able, please stand with me now for the reading of the inspired, inerrant, and infallible Word of God.

Romans 3:19-28

[19] Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God.

[20] For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

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

[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,

[24] and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

[25] whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.

[26] It 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.

[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.

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

(PRAY)

Holy God,

•Help us today. Help us to understand. Help us to see.

•Help us to believe.

•Help us to forsake ourselves and all our attempted obedience.

•Help us to forsake our own righteousness, that we might be found in Christ, not having a righteousness of our own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ.

•Get me out of the way that you might speak to your

People by your Word and Spirit.

•Grant that we would be broken by your Law and put back together by your Gospel.

•Show us our Lord Jesus Christ and the righteousness that you give to us in Him alone.

•Have mercy on us today. And sanctify us in the truth. Your Word is truth.

•We ask these things in Jesus' Name and for His sake.

•Amen.

1.) In vv19-20, the Apostle Paul is finishing the argument he began in 1:18.

•He has been demonstrating that all mankind, both Jew and Gentile, are guilty of sin before God.

•He showed that the Gentiles are guilty of all manner of sin in chapter 1.

•And then in chapters 2-3 he shows that the Jews are just as sinful as the Gentiles.

•It was easy to see that the Gentiles were wicked because they didn't have the OT Scriptures (the written Law of God), they weren't part of the nation of Israel, and they served false gods.

•But the Jews were reluctant to believe that they also were sinful. So Paul takes all of chapter 2 and up to v19 of chapter 3 to demonstrate that the Jews were indeed just as sinful as the Gentiles, even though they had the privilege of having the written Law of God.

•This is reiterated in vv9-10 when Paul says, "What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, as it is written: 'None is righteous, no, not

one...”

And then the Apostle goes on to quote from many places in the OT in vv10-18 that demonstrate the sinfulness of mankind as a whole.

•He says things like, “...no one seeks for God. All have turned aside...no one does good...they use their tongues to deceive...Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood...There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

•And Paul says that these things are true of ALL MANKIND, both Jew and Gentile.

Then in v19, Paul begins his conclusion:

•“Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law...”

•There are a few different ways that Paul uses the word “law” in the book of Romans.

•But considering that he just finished quoting multiple places in the OT and then refers to “the law” in v19, we see that he is calling the entire OT Scriptures “the law” in this sentence.

•And he says that whatever the OT says, it speaks to “those under the law.” That’s one of the ways that Paul refers to the Jews: Those under the law.

•His point is that whatever the OT says, it says first to the Jew and then to the Gentile.

•So all of these terrible things that have been said in vv9-18 apply first the Jew, then to everyone else.

•His point stands firm, then: ALL MANKIND IS SINFUL AND GUILTY BEFORE GOD.

This is why he then says in v19, “...so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God.”

- The Scriptures, the written Law of God, renders everyone guilty.
- All the world is shut up in God’s courtroom. All are rendered without an excuse. No one has a defense to make in the presence of God.
- The Word of God speaks and it shows that everyone, without exception, is guilty of sin and deserving of condemnation.

Then Paul goes on to say in v20: “For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.”

- This verse is very important.
- Paul here says that by “works of the law no human being will be justified” in God’s sight.
- To “be justified” is to be declared righteous. Not made righteous, but declared righteous.
- It’s a legal term. Its a courtroom word. To be justified is to have a judge declare you to be righteous (in the right) concerning your case.
- Theologically speaking, to be justified is to have declare declare you to be righteous in His sight. It’s to have God NOT CONDEMN YOU.
- To be justified is to have God look at you and say, “He is right with me.”

And Paul says that God’s declaration of righteousness WILL NOT COME TO US BY WORKS OF THE LAW.

- We will not be declared righteous in God's sight by working the law.
- To put it a different way: We will not be made right with God, we will avoid condemnation by obeying the law.

And that leads us to a crucial question: What are "the works of the law?"

- What is "the law" that Paul is referring to here?
- This is a huge part of the debate between Rome and other heretical groups VS Protestant/Biblical Christianity.
- Some will claim that "works of the law" is a reference to the CEREMONIAL LAW ONLY.
- They claim that Paul is ONLY saying that you will not be justified by being circumcised, obeying dietary regulations, ritual washings, and festival observances.
- That is the vast majority position of the RCC and other heretical groups that deny Justification by Faith Alone.
- They say that you will not be saved by obeying the Ceremonial Law. But that does not exclude obedience to the Moral Law.
- You see, there are some, like Rome, who teach that justification, right standing with God, comes by faith PLUS obedience to the Moral Law (among other ritual things they make you do).
- They teach that God will not declare a sinner to be righteous in His sight until a sinner has actually become righteous through obedience to the Moral Law.

Do you see what is at stake?

- If Paul is talking about only the Ceremonial Law, then Rome may be right about how sinners are saved.

- But if Paul is talking about both the Ceremonial AND Moral Law, if Paul is talking about the commandments of God in general, then Paul is teaching that we will not be declared righteous by any obedience that we offer at all.
- Instead, our justification, our being declared righteous by God must come through the work of someone else.
- Much is at stake here.

So what “law” is Paul talking about when he says, “by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight”?

- I believe he is referring to the WHOLE LAW of God. Every command that God has ever given to men.
- This includes the Ceremonial AND Moral Law. But with a primary focus on the MORAL.
- And I say that because in this same verse Paul says that “through the law comes knowledge of sin.”
- And the Ceremonial Law doesn’t reveal sin. At least, not apart from the Moral Law.
- Sin is a violation of God’s Moral standards. Ceremonial Laws are not inherently moral, so they cannot reveal immortality and sin in human beings.
- Furthermore, when Paul talks about the law revealing sin in Romans 7:7, he doesn’t appeal to the Ceremonial Law. He appeals to the Ten Commandments.
- That is, he appeals to the summary of the Moral Law. Romans 7:7 says, “...Yet if it had not been for the LAW, I would not have known sin...”
- Paul is saying there what he says here in v20: The Law reveals sin.
- And then he goes on to say, “For I would not have known what it is to COVET if the LAW had not said, ‘You

shall not covet.”

- Brothers and sisters, that is the Tenth Commandment. That is a Moral Law.

- Paul is saying that the Moral Law reveals our sin.
- So then, “works of the Law” must be a reference to the Moral Law, even if it also contains a reference to the Ceremonial as well.

To go further, we look back to chapter 2 and see this same idea of Moral Law when Paul talks about the Law.

•2:14-15 says, “For when Gentiles, who do not have the law (the OT), BY NATURE do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the WORK OF THE LAW IS WRITTEN ON THEIR HEARTS, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them...”

- The Gentiles sometimes obey the Law BY NATURE, even though they don’t have the written Scriptures.

- And in doing so, they prove that the Law is written on their hearts.

- Now what Law is written on our hearts by nature?

- Not the Ceremonial. People don’t intrinsically know to abstain from pork and get circumcised.

- The Natural Law is the Moral Law that God has written on everyone’s hearts.

Later in vv21-23, Paul is rebuking the Jews who boast that they are righteous because they have the written Law.

- And he says, “you then who teach others, do you not

teach yourself? While you preach against STEALING, do you steal? You who say that one must not commit ADULTERY, do you commit adultery? You who abhor IDOLS, do you rob temples? You who boast in the LAW dishonor God by BREAKING THE LAW.”

- When Paul speaks about the Law here, he mentions stealing, adultery, and idolatry.

- Those are the Eighth, Seventh, and Second Commandments. Those are Moral Laws.

In vv25-27 Paul says,

- “For circumcision is indeed of value IF YOU OBEY THE LAW, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. So if a man WHO IS UNCIRCUMCISED KEEPS THE PRECEPTS OF THE LAW, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? Then he who is physically uncircumcised BUT KEEPS THE LAW will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision BUT BREAK THE LAW.”

- Paul here seems to be pitting the Ceremonial against the Moral Law, in a sense.

- He says that those who are circumcised (keeping the Ceremonial Law) are also those who break the law.

- And those who are not circumcised (not keeping the Ceremonial Law) keep the law, nevertheless.

- Paul is clearly talking about the Moral Law in this passage. For how else can one who is not obeying the Ceremonial Law also be said to keep the law unless Paul is talking about a different law; namely the Moral?

2.) I know that was a lot.

- But taking all of this together, we now understand what

Paul says in v20: “For by works of the law no human being will be justified in His sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.”

- You WILL NOT be made right with God by your obedience or attempted obedience to any of His commandments.
- Your works cannot save you. Your works cannot take away your sin. Your works cannot make you righteous in God’s sight.
- Not even works coupled with faith can save you. Not even your attempted obedience to the Law after you believe can make you right with God.

Why? Because “through the law comes knowledge of sin.”

- The Law simply reveals that you are a sinner.
- When you compare yourself to the commands of God, it becomes evident that you have not kept them.
- In other words, the law reveals your sin. The law gives you knowledge that you are sinful because you have broken the holy Law of God.
- That is ALL that the Law can do for you with regard to your salvation: IT CONDEMNS YOU.
- Why? Because you haven’t kept the Law.

The Law can’t make you righteous.

- The Law can’t forgive you of your sins.
- The Law can only do this: Tell you what God demands and then reveal whether or not you’ve obeyed God perfectly. That’s it.
- Just like a mirror can’t clean your face, but only shows you whether your face is dirty or clean, so also the Law

cannot make you righteous but only reveals whether or not you've kept the Law.

- And the verdict is in: YOU HAVE NOT.

You have not kept God in first place in your life.

•You have not worshipped God exclusively according to His will.

- You have not shown God the reverence He deserves.
- You have not made proper time for God.
- You have not obeyed God-given authorities.
- You have hated and harmed others.
- You have been sexually immoral in some way.
- You have taken what was not yours.
- You have deceived and lied.
- You have not been content.

As the Lord Jesus summarizes the Moral Law:

•You have not loved God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.

•And you have not loved your neighbor as you love yourself.

- You have not perfectly kept the Law.
- You are a sinner. That's what the Law says about you.
- The Law does not declare you righteous. Rather, the Law reveals your unrighteousness before God.

According to the Law, we are damned.

•And it's too late to change it.

•Trying to obey the Law for right standing with God, even now after realizing you've sinned still won't make you right with God.

- Why? Because you've already broken it.

- In fact, Paul tells us in chapter 5 that we were born guilty in our father Adam because of his sin. We were born guilty according to the Law.

- So there has never been a time in our lives where obeying the Law of God could ever save us. But **ESPECIALLY NOT NOW** with our personal sins.

Even if you began to obey the Law today and kept it perfectly (you can't), the Law will still condemn you.

- Why? Because of your PAST SINS.
- Obeying God today won't undo yesterday's sin.
- You are still guilty.

Hear me clearly: Obeying God's Law simply cannot make us righteous in God's sight.

- And that's because of OUR SIN!
- The Law condemns and reveals sin. And so, "by works of the law no human being will be justified in His sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin."

- We will not be declared righteous in God's sight by works of the Law because we do not have any righteousness by the Law by which to be declared righteous.

- We don't have perfect, spotless obedience. And so, God will not declare us righteous by the Law.

We are open and liable to the judgment of the Holy One of Israel because of our sin.

- We deserve His condemnation and wrath. We deserve Hell for disobeying God.
- And our works can't fix our problem.

3.) So what are we to do? What hope is there for us?

- Praise be to God, the Apostle is not finished:
- “But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it...”
- You should get on your knees and thank God in Heaven for this verse.
- The Law reveals sin and condemns us. But praise God, there is still a way for sinners to be declared righteous in His sight.
- There is a way to be made right with God that has been manifested/revealed APART FROM THE LAW.
- There is a way to be declared righteous in God’s sight, have a right relationship to Him, even though we are sinners.
- There is a way way to be right with God that has NOTHING TO DO with your obedience to the Law.
- There is a righteousness that can be ours and it is apart from the Law.

But what is this righteousness?

- “The righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe...”
- Righteousness that comes FROM God can be ours.
- How do we know it’s FROM God? Because it is righteousness “through faith in Jesus Christ...”
- It is righteousness that is received by us through faith in Jesus Christ. And so, if we receive it, this righteousness must come FROM God.
- We have no righteousness according to the Law. All

we have is sin. But God has decided to give us righteousness so that we can be declared righteous in His sight and saved from the condemnation of the Law that we deserve.

- As Paul says in Philippians 3:9, “not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness FROM GOD that depends on faith.”

Brothers and sisters, if we're ever to be declared righteous by God, it's going to be because of a righteousness that is given to us.

- It will not be by a righteousness that we've earned through obedience to God, because we've already shot that into the ground in our sin.

- But praise God, He says that He will give us righteousness to be justified by so that we don't have to be condemned by our own unrighteousness.

But what is this righteousness?

- Paul doesn't dive into it here. But in Romans 5, he tells us more.

- And he teaches us that the righteousness given to us is Jesus Christ's perfect righteousness.

- That's why this righteousness comes “through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.”

In Romans 5:12-21, the Apostle is comparing Adam to Christ.

- And he's showing how Adam's sin and disobedience led to sin and death for all who are in Adam. (Everyone.)

- But then he tells of how because of Jesus and His

perfect obedience, all who are in Him are justified by His obedience.

•In 5:18-19 we read, “Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.”

•Paul says that just as Adam’s guilt and disobedience were credited to all of his descendants, so also Christ’s perfect obedience to God is credited to all who believe on Him and are united to Him by faith.

•This is the righteousness that comes from God that is promised to all who believe. It is the perfect, spotless, sinless righteousness of Jesus Christ Himself.

The Lord Jesus Christ perfectly kept all that God commanded of Him.

•He was perfectly obedience to His Father. Perfectly obedience to God and His Law at every point.

•He never sinned. He perfectly loved God and neighbor.

•As Peter said, “He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in His mouth.” (1 Peter 2:22)

•And Paul is telling us that this perfect righteousness of Christ can become ours.

•We can have Christ’s righteousness. And we can have it completely apart from our works.

•And instead of being judged and found guilty because of our sin, we can be judged according to the righteousness of Christ and be found perfect in God’s sight.

- And, therefore, God will declare us righteous. God will justify us because of Christ's obedience.

- Though the righteousness does not properly belong to us because we did not do the works, nevertheless God will credit it to our account and DECLARE us righteous because Christ and His works have been given to us.

And what do we need to do to receive the righteousness of God?

- Is there some law we need to obey?
- Do we need to believe and also obey the Law in addition to faith in order to be declared righteous?
- Is there some ritual we need to perform before we will be declared righteous?
- ABSOLUTELY NOT!
- V22 says, "The righteousness of God THROUGH FAITH in Jesus Christ for all who believe."

It is by faith. Not by obedience.

- Remember, it is "apart from the law."
- It is apart from any obedience we render to God.
- It is, therefore, BY FAITH ALONE. That's all that the Apostle mentions here.

But what is faith?

- To put it simply, faith is trusting in God's promise concerning Jesus Christ.
- Just as God promised to send the Messiah through Abraham and "Abraham believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness." (Romans 4:3)
- Abraham believed God's promise that He would send the Messiah, Jesus Christ. And God counted it to Him as

righteousness.

- God gave Abraham righteousness by faith.
- We are justified by faith in the same way.
- Faith is trusting that God will do what He said He will do. Namely, that He will credit you with Christ's righteousness. That He has done enough in Jesus Christ to save you.
- Paul says here that if you trust God's promise to save you on account of Christ and His righteousness, then He will do it.
- Though you are unrighteous by the Law, you will be declared righteous through faith in Jesus Christ.

4.) The Apostle goes on to drive home his point about how we are declared righteous with God:

•“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...”

- All have sinned. All men are sinful. But the one who believes in Christ is “justified by His grace as a gift.”
- Catch that!
- Is it by obedience? Is it by believing and also obeying God really well? Is it by any kind of law keeping?
- NO. Paul says that we are justified “by His grace as a gift.”

Grace is unmerited favor from God.

- And we know that, in part, because the Apostle says IT IS A GIFT! And you don't earn gifts!
- To earn a gift is a contradiction of terms. Gifts are given freely. Gifts are not owed. Gifts are not merited.
- Gifts are given by a gracious Giver!

- This means that we don't earn justification. We don't do a single thing to merit it. Merit is totally excluded in this sentence!

- You simply receive justification as you receive a gift.
- God simply gives it to the one who believes on Christ.
- There is no ladder for you to climb. There is no mountain for you to conquer.
- Rather, God graciously comes to the sinner who believes and gives the gift of righteousness and justification.

I can't stress this enough: You don't earn right standing with God! It is a pure gift. It is all of grace.

- If you have to do one single thing, render one ounce of obedience in order to receive justification, then it is no longer a gift of grace.

- If you have to work at any point along the way whatsoever, then justification is no longer by grace but is by works and merit.

- Paul makes this clear in Romans 4:4: "Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due."

- If you have to work for justification at any point, then God owes you right standing with Him.

- But answer me this: Can you put God in your debt? Can you make God owe you salvation?

- Of course not! Even your attempted obedience after you believe on Christ is still tainted with sin in some way! So then, your works could never be good enough for God to declare you righteous because of what you've done.

- The Apostle is underlining that salvation is all of grace

and never at any point depends on our works!

We can't earn anything from God. Because we cannot put Him in our debt.

•But we can receive a free gift from a gracious God. And that's Paul's point.

•We can receive God's gift by faith. That is not work. That's simply receiving.

•Faith is the hand that God puts the gift into. That is no work at all.

•And God is pleased to give justification and righteousness as a gift because He is kind to sinners.

5.) Paul then goes on to tell us that this gift comes to us, "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by His blood, to be received by faith."

•Christ redeemed us. The word "redeem" means to set slaves free at a price.

•Christ made a payment of some kind in order that we might be set from the condemnation of the Law.

You see, we don't just need perfect obedience. We also need our sins taken away and paid for.

•If we were sinless, we would only need perfect righteousness. But since we have sinned and do sin, we need an atonement for sin as well.

•God will not wink at our sin.

•He desires to give us righteousness. But our sin must still be dealt with so that God's holiness and justice are not compromised.

- So we need a payment to be made for our sins.

And Paul says that Christ made redemption for us.

- He made the payment so we who have broken the Law can go free and receive the declaration of righteousness.

- And He did this when God put Him forward “as a propitiation by His blood...”

- Christ was publicly made our redemption.
- Christ was publicly crucified. Publicly set forward by God in our place.

And He was our propitiation.

- This is one of the most glorious words in all of Scripture.

- To “propitiate” means to satisfy or appease the wrath of another.

- And in this context, it refers to Christ satisfying the wrath of God that is due to us for our sin.

- Christ was put forward by God to be the Satisfier of God’s wrath in our place.

At the Cross, our Lord suffered divine justice for our sins.

- He who knew no sin was made sin for us.
- And God punished Him as if He had committed the sins of all who would ever believe.
- Just as we deserve to be shown no mercy because we have broken God’s holy Law, so God was merciless to His Son at the Cross.
- And God treated Jesus as if He were us.

At the Cross, Christ was numbered among the transgressors.

- He was put under the wrath of God as if He had committed our sins.
- And there He received the stroke of divine justice for us in our place.
- There He paid for our sins and took them away.
- Our sins were credited to His account so that His righteousness could be credited to ours.
- He took the bitter cut of God's wrath and drank it down until there was nothing left for us.
- And He satisfied God's wrath for our sins.
- He did this so that we, having our debt to God erased by His blood, might receive the righteousness of God by faith.

And He did this, as Paul says in v26, so that God would be "just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus."

- By setting Christ forward to pay the penalty for law-breaking, God showed that He was still holy and righteous because He did not compromise His Law and still demanded payment for sin.
- But He did this so that He might also be the One who declares sinners to be righteous in His sight, though they have offended Him.
- What wisdom and mercy and holiness and grace and justice and love!
- It has been rightly said that at the Cross, God's justice and mercy kiss one another.
- Amen and amen. God is just and the justifier.

In Christ, God has taken care of all our problems.

- We have a debt of sin that needs paid for. And Jesus satisfied God's wrath and paid our debt.
- And we positively need righteousness that we cannot earn because we can't keep the Law perfectly. And God gives us the righteousness of Christ.
- And all of this, every bit of it, is given to us by grace, as a gift, to be received by faith.
- It is completely apart from the Law. It is apart from any works of obedience from us.
- It is received by faith.

6.) And now we come to the conclusion:

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

•Having this glorious Gospel of grace set before you, the Apostle asks: Where is your boasting? What room is there for you to boast about anything? What did you do for your right standing with God? What can you take credit for?

- The answer is a resounding: NOTHING!
- There is no room for boasting.
- We did nothing. God in Christ did everything.
- We can take credit for nothing.
- As Martin Luther said, “We are beggars; this is true.”
- We are beggars who have received grace from God.

We earn nothing. But we are given everything through faith in Jesus Christ.

- God has done it all for us in Christ.

- And we are simply passive recipients of His grace and salvation.

There are two ways to be justified: Perfectly keep the Law or have faith in Jesus Christ and receive His righteousness on your behalf.

- And since Paul has ruled out our works, we are left with one thing: Faith alone in Christ alone.

- Oh, that God might get this into our heads and hearts!

- Christ is all!

- We are beggars!

- God is gracious!

7.) Brothers and sisters, take hold of this Gospel and do not let anyone take it from you!

- This is EVERYTHING! For Christ is EVERYTHING!

Don't listen to Satan.

- Don't listen to Rome.

- Don't listen to the world.

- Don't listen to yourself.

Listen to the Word of God that declares that you are justified by faith alone in Christ alone.

- Listen to the voice of God speaking that says, "By works of the Law no human being will be justified in His sight...BUT NOW the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law..."

- Listen to your Master's voice saying, "I've done enough to save you."

- And cling to Him with all you've got. He is no liar. He will not deceive you.

- His Word is truth. And His Word says that you are justified by grace, through faith, in Christ.

- And all this is apart from anything you do.

So, Christian, rejoice in your Savior!

- It is finished! He has done it!

- You who believe are right with God.

May God give us grace to believe.

- And, believing, may He give us peace in our hearts that cannot be shaken.

- Amen.