

SCRIPTURE: Romans 3:21-26 TITLE: "Justified in the Gospel"

Intro: **Still in the court room.** Awaiting the verdict. Judge and jury are gone. What are they gonna say? Sleepless night. Waiting. Waiting. Waiting. Last few weeks. All about sin. Now all about grace!

Thesis: "God's Justifying Grace is far Greater than we could ever imagine."

I. We're Listening to the Verdict (21-23)

- A. **Righteousness of God**, His righteousness, God's righteousness (4x), **WHOSE?!**
- B. **Manifested**. Shown. Made known. Revealed. Appeared. Has become visible. Realized.
- C. **The Law & Prophets bore witness**. Mystery of Gospel revealed. Atonement. Sacrifice. Blood.

ILLUSTRATION: **Reliable Witness**. Testimony in Court. The Law condemns us. We're guilty.

Righteousness revealed by faith in the Gospel. God's Word is a reliable testimony. New evidence! Alibi.

- D. **No Distinction**. All have sinned, which means all can be forgiven. All condemned, which means any can be justified. If there's even one who can be forgiven, then we all can. If there's any who can't be, then none can. This is how God's justice works. Because his grace is not based on the person or performance, but His sovereign love.

APPLICATION: **If there's no distinction, it means he doesn't make a distinction between our sin either. We're all guilty under the law, we can all be forgiven under grace.**

- **You'll never be good enough, and that's good enough. You can't do enough. And knowing that is enough.** You can't even come close to the righteous requirements of the law. The Law was never intended to do that, but to reveal God's righteousness and our sinfulness and need. So relax. You're way worse than you think you are. **"Cheer up! You're far more sinful than you could ever imagine. But Cheer up! God's grace for you in Jesus is far greater than you could ever dare hope!"**
- **Think I'm a sinner? Don't know 1/2 of it? You don't know the 1/4 of it, b/c I don't know 1/2 of it! Haha.**
- **Only People in Heaven, ones who know they deserve Hell. Many in Hell, think deserve Heaven.**

II. "NOT GUILTY!" (24-26)

- A. **Justified by Grace Alone through Faith Alone in Jesus Christ Alone!**
- B. **Justification** (3x). **Righteousness** (4x). This is what Justification is all about. A declaration and standing before God and others. I'm not guilty! I'm innocent. Because of Jesus. Counted.
- C. **"Just as if I'd never sinned."** **"Simul Justus et Peccator."** Righteous-Sinner. **Pirate-Monks.**
- D. **"Not really though."** "You're counted as righteous, but not really righteous." **Doesn't count!**
- E. **You win the game, but you don't really win the game. Then it doesn't count!**
- F. **All of Grace**. Gift. Free. Receive it.
- G. **Redemption**. Buying back. Paying off. Price Satisfied.
- H. **Propitiation**. Wrath satisfied. No more anger. None left. Only joy, love and delight. :-)
- I. **God put Him forward**. His idea. His plan. Pleased the Lord to crush Him.
- J. **By His Blood**. It cost Jesus - God's Son - His own blood. So I'm not taking it lightly. I hate it.
- K. **Received by Faith (3x)**. ALL who believe. That's it. That simple. Believe! Just believe. Too easy.
- L. **In Christ Jesus, in Jesus, in Jesus Christ. (3x)**. Only in HIM! Exclusive. Yes. Inclusive. Yes.
- M. **God is Just**. God is the Justifier. He is Grace. He is Mercy. He is the provider. **1 John 1:9.**

APPLICATION:

- **It's impossible to overemphasize grace.** Only misunderstand it or misapply it, nullify it or abuse it.
- ILLUSTRATION: **Grace is a shovel. Not a Tarp.** Don't make enough of grace. Don't believe it enough to repent. To be honest about our sin. To rest in his love. To have joy even in the face of real struggle.
- **Gospel Chant: "Completely forgiven, nothing to hide. Perfectly Righteous in Christ, nothing to prove. Eternally loved, nothing to fear."**
 - **"Have to try to be better."** No we don't! You don't! But you'll want to be & you will be. :-) **Guaranteed.**
 - **Is your Gospel radical enough? Is your Jesus big enough? Is His grace outlandish enough? Is it?**
 - **Some of you want me to qualify this, but I'm not gonna.** We will in Rom.6. Paul will. I did some last week. But this week I want to leave you wrestling with this, having a hard time believing God's grace can be this gracious. But it is. It's more gracious and generous and free than we could ever believe.
 - **Devil still saying "Guilty!" "No I'm not!" God's verdict is "Not Guilty!"** Haha! Bring Him to **shame.**
 - **Jesus said: "My Yoke is Easy. My burden is light."** If your Christianity, faith, understanding of gospel, view of grace, repentance, faith, obedience, still causes you to be burdened, heavy, hard, weighed down, then you have a gospel problem. You don't Understand it, Believe it, Apply it, Emphasize it fully. Until you're burden is light, and yoke is easy, then you still have gospel work to do. You still have Jesus