

## The Book of Romans.04. Justification.03

**Today, we continue in the study of the Doctrine of Justification in the Book of Romans**

**A basic outline of the Book of Romans is**

- 1:1-1:17** - Introduction
- 1:18-5:21** - **The Doctrine of Justification**
- 6:1-8:39** - The Doctrine of Sanctification
- 9:1-11:36** - The Sovereignty of God in Salvation
- 12:1-15:13** - Practical Instructions
- 15:14-16:27** - Conclusion

→ As can be seen from this outline, the Doctrine of Justification is the foundational doctrine for our relationship with God and “*the power of God for salvation*” to us who believe (Rom. 1:16)

**In setting forth the Doctrine of Justification, Romans 1:18-5:21 states that while there are 2 ways to be justified, there is only one way to be saved from the righteous judgment of God**

**(1) One way is on the basis of what one has done, according to one’s works**

- This way of justification is set forth in **Romans 1:18-3:20**
- (a) **Romans 1:18-32** focuses the “*Greeks*” or “*Gentiles*”
  - (b) **Romans 2:1-3:8** addresses “*the Jews*”
  - (c) **Romans 3:9-20** deals with “*both Jews and Greeks*”

**(2) The second way to be justified is by grace through faith alone in Jesus Christ**

- This way of justification and the only way of salvation is addressed in **Romans 3:21-5:21**
- (a) **Romans 3:21-31** - Justification by Grace through Faith
  - (b) **Romans 4:1-25** - Abraham Justified by Grace through Faith
  - (c) **Romans 5:1-11** - The Blessings of Justification
  - (d) **Romans 5:12-21** - Adam and Christ

→ Today, we look at **Romans 3:9-20, the conclusion of justification according to works, and Romans 3:21-31, the basic statement of justification by grace through faith in Christ**

**Having set forth, first, the case against “*Greeks*”/Gentiles in Romans 1:18-32, that they are under the “*wrath of God*” because of the things they “*practice*,” and, second, the case against the Jews in Romans 2:1-3:8, that they cannot “*escape*” the future “*wrath of God*” on the Day of Judgment because “*they do the same things*,” Romans 3:9-20 is the summation of the prosecution of God against both “*the Jews*” and “*the Greeks*”/Gentiles**

**A Basic Outline of Romans 3:9-20 is**

- (a) **Romans 3:9** - The charge against both Jews and Greeks
- (b) **Romans 3:10-18** - The evidence from Scripture
- (c) **Romans 3:19-20** - The conclusion: No one will be justified by works

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### (a) Romans 3:9 - The charge against both Jews and Greeks

- While “*the Jews*” have “*the advantage*” over the “*the Greeks*” because they are in a covenant relationship with God, signified in the sacrament of “*circumcision*,” and have been given the Scripture and “*the Law*” of God, they, like the Gentiles, have sinned
- The question, then, is: Are “*the Jews*” any better than the Gentiles in seeking to be justified on the basis of their works according to the Law?
- The answer is “*No*” because they, like the Gentiles, have sinned and are also “*under*” the righteous judgment of condemnation by God awaiting the wrath of God (Rom. 1:18; 2:5, 8-9)
- **Romans 3:9** = *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*

### (b) Romans 3:10-18 - The evidence from Scripture

- The evidence that is presented is not merely the citation of their works (Rom. 1:28-32; 2:21-24), but charges from the very word of God written in holy Scripture
- This evidence is presented in three ways:

#### (1) Romans 3:10-12: 6 Absolute Judgments in Regard to Works of All People

- **Romans 3:10-12** = *As it is written, “None is righteous, no, not one; <sup>11</sup> no one understands; no one seeks for God. <sup>12</sup> All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one*

Two statements specifically correspond to the principle of justification by works in Romans 2:6-13 that God “*will render to each one according to his works*” (2:6)

(a) **Romans 2:8** states there will be “*wrath*” for those who are “*unrighteous*”

- **Romans 2:8** = *for those who obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury*
- **Romans 3:10** begins with the verdict: “*None is righteous, no, not one*”

(b) **Romans 2:7, 10** state God will give eternal life to those who “*do good*”

- **Romans 2:7** = *to those who by patience in well-doing (good works) he will give eternal life*
- **Romans 2:10** = *glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good*
- **Romans 3:12** concludes = *no one does good, not even one*

#### (2) Romans 3:13-17: 7 Specific Examples of Sinful Actions

- **Romans 2:13-17** = *Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive; the venom of asps is under their lips. <sup>14</sup> Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness. <sup>15</sup> Their feet are swift to shed blood; <sup>16</sup> in their paths are ruin and misery, <sup>17</sup> and the way of peace they have not known*

#### (3) Romans 3:18: The Basic Root Motive of the Human Heart

- **Romans 3:18** = *There is no fear of God before their eyes*

“*The fear of the LORD*” is the most basic Biblical definition of true religion and heart relationship with God

- It is the “*fear of the LORD*” that is to rule in the heart and govern all our life and works
- Because there is “*no fear of God*,” all works produced from fallen human nature (“*the flesh*”) are “*corrupt*” (Ps. 14:1)

### (c) Romans 3:19-20 - The Verdict: No One Will Be Justified on the Basis of Their works

**Romans 2:13 sets forth the fundamental principle of justification on the basis of works**

- **Romans 2:13** = *For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified.*

- **Romans 3:19-20** is the final verdict in regard to being justified according to works

- **Romans 3:19-20** = *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. <sup>20</sup> For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.*

**This final verdict renders 3 absolutes: (1) “every mouth may be stopped, (2) the whole world may be held accountable to God, (3) no human being will be justified in his sight**

- This final verdict means that “every human being” individually, and “the whole world” collectively is under and awaiting the wrath of God “on the day of wrath when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed,” “when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus” (Romans 2:5, 16)

- Notice: this is “the gospel” - the good news that Paul and Scripture “preach” (Rom 1:15)

### As stated above Romans 3:21-5:21 reveals the second way to be justified and the only way to be saved, which is by grace through faith alone in Jesus Christ

➔ **Romans 3:21-31 sets forth the basic statement of justification by grace through faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ**

**The most critical concern in regard to justification is “the righteousness of God”**

- Since “by works of the law no human being [literally, “no flesh”] will be justified in his sight” (3:20), this “righteousness” is clearly not a “righteousness” that is produced by a “human being” according to his/her works, whether one is a “Jew” or “Greek”/Gentile”

- It is the “righteousness” which is “of God”

- It is this “righteousness” that is absolutely essential receive in order to be “justified”

- While “the love of God” is the motivation of God to provide and reveal the only way of justification and salvation (Rom. 5:8), it is “the righteousness of God” that is the critical concern because a person must be “righteous” in order to be justified and saved

**The fundamental issue in regard to the “righteousness of God” is the justice of God**

- The justice of God is the most basic, underlying issue of life and existence

- In this passage about God rendering justice, the “righteousness of God” has two connotations:

**(1) The “righteousness of God” is legal standing from God**

- Because the justice of God requires a person to be righteous before Him, the “righteousness of God” is the “righteous” legal standing of a person who is “justified” before God

- This “righteousness” is what God, the Sovereign and Supreme Judge of the universe, declares a person to have and be in their legal standing before Him

- **Romans 3:21** = *But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it*

- **Romans 3:22** = *the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe*

**(2) The “righteousness of God” that is according to God’s righteous nature**

- Because God can only do what is righteous and just, the justification of a person must (a) be according to and (b) must satisfy the righteous requirements of His own just nature and Being
- **Romans 3:25** = *This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.*
- **Romans 3:26** = *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.*

**This “righteousness of God” “has been manifested” “now”**

- **Romans 3:21** = *But now the righteousness of God has been manifested*
- **Romans 3:26** = *It was to show his righteousness at the present time.*
- The Greek word translated “manifested” in 3:21 is φανερώω, which means “that which was hidden and not understood has appeared and is made known”
- The tense is:
  - (a) **Perfect**, meaning it is action that has been completed in the past and is effecting the present
  - The way by which a person is justified by God was, to a certain degree, hidden or not fully understood during the time before Christ but “has been manifested” “now” “at the present time” of salvation history with the coming of Christ in His death and resurrection
  - (b) **Passive**, meaning, the action has been done to the subject which is the “righteousness of God”
  - “The righteousness of God” - both the “righteousness” that is from God and the “righteousness” that is according to God’s nature - has “now” been made known by God Himself

**This “righteousness of God” is “apart from law”**

- **Romans 3:21** = *But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law*
- “Apart from law” does not mean that this “righteousness of God” is contrary to “the law” of God or antinomian, meaning free from moral obligation to obey the “law” God
- It means “apart from works according to the law” in order to be justified
- This is the context, because as the previous verse (3:20) states, “by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight”

**While to a certain degree “the righteousness of God” was hidden or not fully understood during the time of salvation history before Christ, it was, nevertheless, revealed and testified to in the Scriptures**

- **Romans 3:21** = *But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it*
- This will be expounded in Romans chapter 4, looking especially at the life of Abraham as the foremost example and model of “justification through faith”
- This “righteousness of God” was and is recorded in the “law,” meaning the foundational Scriptures of the first five books written by Moses (Gen. 15:6//Rom. 4:3), and “the prophets” which can include not only the Major and Minor prophetic writings (Hab. 2:4//Rom. 1:17) but also the “writing,” such as the Psalms (Ps. 32:1-2//Rom. 4:7-8)

**The means through which this “righteousness of God” that is “apart from works of the Law” comes to a person is “through faith in Jesus Christ”**

- **Romans 3:22** = *the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ .*
- **Romans 3:24-25** = *are justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup> whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.*
- **Romans 3:26** = *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.*
- **Romans 3:28** = *For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.*
- “Through faith” means “through faith alone”
- ➔ It is not “faith plus works” - any kind of work that is produced out of fallen human nature that is trusted in and relied on as a basis on which a person will or can be “justified”

**This is the fundamental difference between the historic Reformation/Protestant doctrine of “justification” and the Roman Catholic and (Eastern) Orthodox doctrines of “justification”**

- The Reformation/Protestant doctrine of “justification” is a legal “*righteousness of God*” that is judicially declared, granted, or imputed to “the one who has faith in Jesus”
- It is not in any way dependent on or related to the personal sanctification of the individual
- To the contrary, in the moment of believing in Jesus the individual is a “*helpless,*” “*ungodly,*” “*sinner,*” an “*enemy of God*” (Rom. 5:6, 8, 10)
- The Roman Catholic and Orthodox doctrines of “justification” combination “faith in Jesus” and sanctification, meaning a person must become personally righteous through union with Christ, and thus, the basis of “justification” is “faith in Jesus” plus one’s personal works

**This “*righteousness of God through faith alone in Jesus Christ*” can and will be granted to any and every individual, whether they are a “Jew” or a “Greek”/Gentile because, left to themselves, all have the same legal standing before God of having “sinned”**

- **Romans 3:22-23** = *the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*
- The reference to “*the glory of God*” means “glorification by God” which is a primary quality of “*eternal life*” and the ultimate destiny of those who are “justified” (Rom. 5:2; 8:18, 30; 9:23)
- It is the promised reward that will be rendered to all who are justified on the basis of their works
- **Romans 2:7** = *to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life*
- **Romans 2:10** = *but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek.*
- However, because “all,” both “Jew” and “Greek”/Gentile, “have sinned,” they “fall short of the glory of God” and, thus, there is “no distinction” between them - all deserve the wrath of God

**Because “by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight (3:20), the only way that a person can be “justified” is by the sovereign act of God Himself which involves two essential things:**

### **(1) The grace of God**

- This is the inward motivation and sovereign choice of God Himself to act according to His divine nature of “love” (Rom. 5:8) to render His judgment that all will be justified” “through faith in Jesus” and not according to their works which are sinful and corrupt
- **Romans 3:24** = *and are justified by his grace as a gift*

- This “justification” entirely proceeds from the underserved, unmerited, kindness and mercy within God Himself to grant “justification” as a “*gift*”
- The Greek word δωρεάν translated “*gift*” is often translated as “free gift” and means “free without cause” of any human worth or works, and not free “without cost”

## **(2) The work of Jesus Christ in His death to pay the penalty for sin**

- The cost of justification by grace through faith alone in Jesus Christ is the death of Jesus Christ
- **Romans 3:24-25** = *and are justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,* <sup>25</sup> *whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.*
- This work of Jesus Christ accomplishes “*redemption*,” meaning He paid the price to buy out of slavery all who believe in Him
- The “slavery” in which humans are in bondage is “*sin and death*” (Rom. 8:2)
- The price Jesus paid was “*propitiation by his blood*”, which means that in pouring out “*his blood*” once-for-all time on the cross His death completely satisfied the justice of God that requires the righteous penalty and punishment of death for the person who sins (Rom. 6:23)

## **The propitiating death of Jesus to pay the price of redemption for all who believe in Him demonstrates the justice of God**

- **Romans 3:25-26** = *This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.* <sup>26</sup> *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.*

- The fundamental issue of God’s justice in justifying sinners by grace through faith alone in Jesus is demonstrated

(a) First, in “*his divine forbearance*” during salvation history in that He did not immediately execute His righteous wrath against sinners but “*he had passed over former sins*” so as to execute His righteous judgment against “sins” upon Jesus in His death

(b) Second, in the “*propitiation by his blood*” which satisfies the justice of God and demonstrates that He is “*just*”

(c) Third, in his “*propitiation by his blood*” that makes it possible for Him to be “*the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus*”

## **There are two results of God justifying sinners by grace through faith in Jesus Christ**

### **(1) No human can boast because all glory goes to God alone**

- **Romans 3:27-28** = *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.* <sup>28</sup> *For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.*

### **(2) The justice of the Law of God in justifying both Jews and Gentile is upheld**

- **Romans 3:29-31** = *Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also,* <sup>30</sup> *since God is one - who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.* <sup>31</sup> *Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.*