

God's righteousness has been revealed apart from the Law, which was necessary because the Law condemns everyone but Jesus can save anyone through redemption, by absorbing God's wrath, and demonstrating God's justice in all who believe (Romans 3:21-26).

[Adv] ²¹ But now, [apart from the law [νόμος]], the righteousness [δικαιοσύνη] of God has been revealed [RPI],
attested [PPP] [by 1.) the Law
2.) [S] and the Prophets].

²² The righteousness of God is [through faith [πίστις] in Jesus Christ] [to all who believe [PAP]], [G] since there is [PAI] no distinction.

[G] ²³ For all 1.) have sinned [AAI]

2.) [S] and fall short [PPI] of the glory of God;

²⁴ they are justified [PPP] freely by his grace [through the redemption] [that is in Christ Jesus].

²⁵ God presented [AMI] him as the mercy seat [ἱλαστήριον]

1.) [by his blood],

2.) [through faith],

3.) [to demonstrate his righteousness],

4.) [because in his restraint]

God passed over the sins previously committed [RAP].

²⁶ God presented him

1.) [to demonstrate his righteousness] [at the present time],

2.) [so that he would 1.) be just [PAN, δίκαιος]

2.) [S] and justify [PAP]]

3.) [the one who has faith in Jesus].

As a result, you cannot boast because salvation is by faith and not works, because there is one means of salvation, because there is one God of salvation, because there is no contradiction in salvation (Romans 3:27-31).

²⁷ Where, [T] then, is boasting? It is excluded [API].

[By what kind of law?] [By one of works?] No, on the contrary, by a law of faith.

[G] ²⁸ For we conclude [PMI] a.) that a person is justified [PPN] by faith [apart from the works of the law].

b.) [A] ²⁹ Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too,

[G] ³⁰ since there is one God who will justify [FAI] 1.) the circumcised [by faith]

2.) [S] and the uncircumcised [through faith].

³¹ Do we then nullify [PAI] the law [through faith]? Absolutely [AMO] not! On the contrary, we uphold [PAI] the law.

Greek	meaning	vs	English	?
δικαιοσύνη	1. in a broad sense: state of him who is as he ought to be, righteousness, the condition acceptable to God 1. the doctrine concerning the way in which man may attain a state approved of God 2. integrity, virtue, purity of life, rightness, correctness of thinking feeling, and acting 2. in a narrower sense, justice or the virtue which gives each his due	21	righteousness of God	2
		22	righteousness of God	2
		25	His righteousness	2
		26	His righteousness	2
		26	he would be just	1.2
δίκαιος	1. righteous, observing divine laws 1. in a wide sense, upright, righteous, virtuous, keeping the commands of God 1. of those who seem to themselves to be righteous, who pride themselves to be righteous, who pride themselves in their virtues, whether real or imagined 2. innocent, faultless, guiltless 3. used of him whose way of thinking, feeling, and acting is wholly conformed to the will of God, and who therefore needs no rectification in the heart or life 1. only Christ truly 4. approved of or acceptable of God 2. in a narrower sense, rendering to each his due and that in a judicial sense, passing just judgment on others, whether expressed in words or shown by the manner of dealing with them	26	he would be just	1.2
		24	they are justified freely by his grace	3
		26	he would be just	1
		26	and justify	3
		28	a person is justified by faith	2
δικαιώω	1. to render righteous or such he ought to be 2. to show, exhibit, evince, one to be righteous, such as he is and wishes himself to be considered 3. to declare, pronounce, one to be just, righteous, or such as he ought to be	30	God who will justify the circumcised	3

Greek	meaning	vs	English	?
πίστις	1. conviction of the truth of anything, belief; in the NT of a conviction or belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervour born of faith and joined with it 1. relating to God 1. the conviction that God exists and is the creator and ruler of all things, the provider and bestower of eternal salvation through Christ 2. relating to Christ 1. a strong and welcome conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through whom we obtain eternal	22	faith in Jesus Christ	1.2.1
		25	through faith	1.2.1
		26	the one who has faith in Jesus	1.2.1
		27	by a law of faith	1.2.1
		28	by faith apart from the works	1.2.1

	salvation in the kingdom of God		of the law	
	3. the religious beliefs of Christians			
	4. belief with the predominate idea of trust (or confidence) whether in God or in Christ, springing from faith in the same	30	the circumcised by faith	1.2.1
	2. fidelity, faithfulness	30	the uncircumcised through faith	1.2.1
	1. the character of one who can be relied on	31	Do we then nullify the law through faith	1.2.1
πιστεύω	1. to think to be true, to be persuaded of, to credit, place confidence in	22	to all who believe	1.2.2
	1. of the thing believed			
	1. to credit, have confidence			
	2. in a moral or religious reference			
	1. used in the NT of the conviction and trust to which a man is impelled by a certain inner and higher prerogative and law of soul			
	2. to trust in Jesus or God as able to aid either in obtaining or in doing something: saving faith			
	3. mere acknowledgment of some fact or event: intellectual faith			
	2. to entrust a thing to one, i.e. his fidelity			
	1. to be entrusted with a thing			

Greek	meaning	vs	English	?
ἱλαστήριον	1. relating to an appeasing or expiating, having placating or expiating force, expiatory; a means of appeasing or expiating, a propitiation 1. used of the cover of the ark of the covenant in the Holy of Holies, which was sprinkled with the blood of the expiatory victim on the annual day of atonement (this rite signifying that the life of the people, the loss of which they had merited by their sins, was offered to God in the blood as the life of the victim, and that God by this ceremony was appeased and their sins expiated); hence the lid of expiation, the propitiatory 2. an expiatory sacrifice 3. a expiatory victim	25	God presented him as the mercy seat	1.1

Greek	meaning	vs	English	?
νόμος	1. anything established, anything received by usage, a custom, a law, a command 1. of any law whatsoever 1. a law or rule producing a state approved of God 1. by the observance of which is approved of God 2. a precept or injunction 3. the rule of action prescribed by reason 2. of the Mosaic law, and referring, acc. to the context. either to the volume of the law or to its contents 3. the Christian religion: the law demanding faith, the moral instruction given by Christ, esp. the precept concerning	21	apart from the law	1.2
		21	attested by the Law	1.4
		27	By what kind of law	1.1
		27	by a law of faith	1.3
		28	the works of the law	1.2

love
4. the name of the more important part (the Pentateuch), is
put for the entire collection of the sacred books of the OT

31 nullify the law 1.2
through faith

31 we uphold the 1/1.2/1.3
law /1.4

Sermon preparation worksheet

Passage: Romans 3:21-31

1. How has the author organised this passage? a) *An outline*, b) *Tools*, c) *The emphasis*.

a) 1) God's righteousness has been revealed apart from the Law, which was necessary because the Law condemns everyone but Jesus can save anyone through redemption, by absorbing God's wrath, and demonstrating God's justice in all who believe (Romans 3:21-26).

2) As a result, man cannot boast because salvation is by faith and not works, because there is one means of salvation, because there is one God of salvation, because there is no contradiction in salvation (Romans 3:27-31).

b) I identified discourse—and so considered the grammar/syntax analysis (especially the verbs, conjunctions, and prepositions), flow of ideas (God's righteousness is available to all who believe, and as a result man cannot boast), as well as repetitions (righteous, justice, faith, law), keywords (redemption, mercy seat, works), and contrasts (works/faith, believe/sinned, Jew/Gentile). All this highlighted the central themes of God's righteousness and Jesus' provision.

c) God upholds His righteous, and provides salvation to all who believe through Jesus' sacrificial death.

2. How does the context inform the meaning of this passage? a) *Literary*, b) *Historical*, c) *Cultural*, d) *Biblical*.

a) 1) In Romans 3:9-20, Paul charges that both Jew and Gentile are guilty of sin, brings evidence against them, and declares the verdict, guilty as charged. In Romans 3:21-31, Paul explains how God can declare the guilty justified and remain completely just at the same time.

2) In Romans 4, Paul explores the example of Abraham who was declared righteous on the basis of his faith alone. In Romans 3:21-31, Paul explains that God's mechanism to declare Old Testament saints righteous was Jesus, who absorbed the wrath of God for all who believe.

b) 1) The Roman church included Jews and Gentiles. In Romans 3:21, Paul undermines Jewish pride and asserts that salvation is available to all through faith in Jesus, rather than through works of the Law.

2) According to the Roman legal system justification was a legal declaration of innocence. In Romans 3:24, Paul borrows the term applying it theologically to salvation.

c) 1) There was a strong cultural division between Jews and Gentiles. The Jews viewed Gentiles as outside God's covenant. The Gentiles saw the Jews as overly legalistic. In Romans 3:22-23, Paul argues that there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles in the matter of salvation. Both are saved by faith in Jesus.

2) The Mercy Seat held cultural significance in Jewish tradition. It was the lid of the Ark of the Covenant where the high priest would sprinkle the blood of a sacrifice on the Day of Atonement to make atonement for the sins of the people. In Romans 3:25, Paul uses the term to highlight the propitiatory nature of Jesus' sacrifice—He satisfied the wrath of God, covering our sins completely, thereby surpassing the Jewish sacrificial system. This image would have appealed to the Jewish audience.

3) Slavery was a ubiquitous institution in Rome, and the idea of redemption was tied to the practice of purchasing a slave's freedom. In Romans 3:24, Paul uses this idea to communicate that Jesus paid the price for humanity's freedom from sin, freeing us from bondage. This image would have appealed to the Gentile audience.

d) There are no direct citations in Romans 3:21-31.

3. What is the main point the author is arguing to his audience?

Whosoever believes in Jesus' propitiatory sacrifice will be justified by God who is just.

4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ?

Jesus is the mercy seat in Romans 3:25. It was on the mercy seat that once a year the high priest would sprinkle the blood of a sacrificed animal to make an atonement for the sins of the people. By His sacrificial death Jesus paid the price in full which the holiness of God demanded, absorbing the full wrath of God, saving man from the condemnation of the Law. By His miraculous resurrection Jesus gives abundant life to those who repent for the forgiveness of sin.

5. What is the main point you will argue to your audience?

Whosoever believes in Jesus' propitiatory sacrifice will be justified by God who is just.

6. What applications will you make? a) *To believers*, b) *To unbelievers*.

a) The declaration that you are righteous doesn't give you a license to sin. It is not a free pass to continue living in rebellion. Rather, now you have freedom to live a transformed life in the light of the righteousness that has been credited to you. You get to live in obedience and gratitude to God. Because you are no longer enslaved to sin you are free to live righteously. So pursue righteousness. Because now you can.

b) You may be declared righteous. Not by any good work you may or may not have done, but because of the Good work Jesus did in your place. He has paid the price your sin deserved, and so, right now, you may place your faith and trust in Him, and receive the free gift of eternal life. Do not delay, come to Christ today.

7. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline? a) *Sermon outline*, b) *Sermon title*.

b) Can God forgive you without violating His justice?

a) 1) God's justice revealed in the Person of Jesus (Romans 3:21-26).

2) God's justice applied in the lives of believers (Romans 3:27-31).

Pray

Read

²¹ But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been revealed, attested by the Law and the Prophets.

²² The righteousness of God is through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe, since there is no distinction. ²³

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; ²⁴ they are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. ²⁵ God presented him

as the mercy seat by his blood, through faith, to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his restraint

God passed over the sins previously committed. ²⁶ God presented him to demonstrate his righteousness at the

present time, so that he would be just and justify the one who has faith in Jesus.

²⁷ Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By one of works? No, on the contrary, by a law of

faith. ²⁸ For we conclude that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. ²⁹ Or is God the God of

Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too, ³⁰ since there is one God who will justify the

circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. ³¹ Do we then nullify the law through faith?

Absolutely not! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

Introduction

- In a vast and thriving kingdom, a rebel rose against the throne. He broke every law, sowed chaos among the people, and even sought the king's life. When the rebel was finally captured, the citizens gathered, demanding justice. "He must pay for his crimes!" they shouted.
- The king, renowned for his perfect justice, summoned the rebel to his throne. His voice was firm as he pronounced, "Your deeds have defied the laws of this land, and justice demands your punishment." The people nodded in agreement, their cries for retribution growing louder.
- But then the king said something that silenced the crowd. "I will forgive the rebel," he declared. A murmur swept through the assembly, giving way to confusion and disbelief.
- "How can the king uphold justice and yet forgive the guilty?" they whispered among themselves.
- This question—how justice and forgiveness can coexist—captures the very heart of the gospel. Like the king in the story, God faces a seeming paradox: how can He, the perfectly just Judge, forgive sinners without compromising His righteousness? The answer lies in the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ, as Paul explains in **Romans 3:21-31**. Let us turn to the Word and see how God, through Christ, is both just and the justifier of those who believe.

Argument

- Whosoever believes in Jesus' propitiatory sacrifice will be justified by God who is just.

Arrangement

- Can God forgive you without violating His justice?
 1. God's justice revealed in the Person of Jesus (**Romans 3:21-26**).
 2. God's justice applied in the lives of believers (**Romans 3:27-31**).

1.) God's justice revealed in the Person of Jesus (Romans 3:21-26).

[Adv] ²¹ But now, [apart from the law [νόμος]], the righteousness [δικαιοσύνη] of God has been revealed [RPI], attested [PPP] [by 1.) the Law 2.) [S] and the Prophets].

- revealed is in the perfect tense, indicating, a once and for all action. The word attested is a participial, it explains how this revelation comes to us, by God's Word, by the Law and the Prophets. The gospel of Jesus runs like a scarlet thread all through the Bible.
- Why is it necessary for God's righteousness to be revealed apart from the Law? Because the Law can only condemn.
- The Roman church included both Jews and Gentiles. In Romans 3:21, Paul undermines Jewish pride and asserts that salvation is available to all through faith in Jesus, rather than through works of the Law.

²² The righteousness of God is [through faith [πίστις] in Jesus Christ] [to all who believe [PAP]], [G] since there is [PAI] no distinction. [G] ²³ For all 1.) have sinned [AAI] 2.) [S] and fall short [PPI] of the glory of God;

- There was a strong cultural division between Jews and Gentiles. The Jews viewed Gentiles as outside God's covenant. The Gentiles saw the Jews as overly legalistic. In Romans 3:22-23, Paul argues that there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles in the matter of salvation. Both are saved by faith in Jesus, because both have sinned against the holiness of God.
- The righteousness of God as opposed to our own self righteousness.
- through faith, which is intellectual assent and practical reliance upon.
- in Jesus Christ, both His Person and His work.
- to all who believe, Jews and Gentiles.
- have sinned, break law/rebel against God.
- and fall short, miss the mark.
- of the glory of God, the standard.
- Because God's standard is perfection, and because we can never attain it, justification can only be by faith alone resting in the Person and finished Work of Jesus.

²⁴ they are justified [PPP] freely by his grace [through the redemption] [that is in Christ Jesus].

- According to the Roman legal system justification was a legal declaration of innocence. In Romans 3:24, Paul borrows the term applying it theologically to salvation.
- Slavery was a ubiquitous institution in Rome, and the idea of redemption was tied to the practice of purchasing a slave's freedom. In Romans 3:24, Paul uses this idea to communicate that Jesus paid the price for humanity's

freedom from sin, freeing us from bondage. This image would have appealed to the Gentile audience.

- We are saved by grace alone, through God's kind, gracious, and free initiative.

²⁵ God presented [AMI] him as the mercy seat [ἰλαστήριον] 1.) [by his blood], 2.) [through faith], 3.) [to demonstrate his righteousness], 4.) [because in his restraint] God passed over the sins previously committed [RAP].

- The problem:

- **Romans 1:18**, For God's wrath is revealed from heaven against all godlessness and unrighteousness of people who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth
- **Romans 2:5**, Because of your hardened and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath, when God's righteous judgment is revealed.
- **Romans 2:8**, but wrath and anger to those who are self-seeking and disobey the truth while obeying unrighteousness.

- The Mercy Seat held cultural significance in Jewish tradition. It was the lid of the Ark of the Covenant where the high priest would sprinkle the blood of a sacrifice on the Day of Atonement to make atonement for the sins of the people. In **Romans 3:25**, Paul uses the term to highlight the propitiatory nature of Jesus' sacrifice—He satisfied the wrath of God, covering our sins completely, thereby surpassing the Jewish sacrificial system. This image would have appealed to the Jewish audience.
- In **Romans 4**, Paul explores the example of Abraham who was declared righteous on the basis of his faith alone. In **Romans 3:21-31**, Paul explains that God's mechanism to declare Old Testament saints righteous was Jesus, who absorbed the wrath of God for all who believe.
- Our forgiveness before God is in Christ alone; not saints, Mary, angels, or any other being. Jesus fully, finally, effectively, completely bore God's righteous wrath against us.

²⁶ God presented him 1.) [to demonstrate his righteousness] [at the present time], 2.) [so that he would 1.) be just [PAN, δίκαιος] 2.) [S] and justify [PAP]] 3.) [the one who has faith in Jesus].

- In **Romans 3:9-20**, Paul charges that both Jew and Gentile are guilty of sin, brings evidence against them, and declares the verdict, guilty as charged. In **Romans 3:21-31**, Paul explains how God can declare the guilty justified and remain completely just at the same time.
- Here is the solution to the riddle. The paradox is resolved in the Person and Work of Christ. God's justice would be satisfied by God's Son So that God would remain just in forgiving men of their sin.
- For all eternity praises will redound to God whose wisdom, power, and love ordained that he would have a people from every tribe, language, and nation to God's glory alone.

Summation

God's righteousness has been revealed apart from the Law, which was necessary because the Law condemns everyone but Jesus can save anyone through redemption, by absorbing God's wrath, and demonstrating God's justice in all who believe.

Transition

- Can God forgive you without violating His justice?
 1. God's justice revealed in the Person of Jesus (Romans 3:21-26).

2.) God's justice applied in the lives of believers (Romans 3:27-31).

²⁷ Where, **[T]** then, is boasting? It is excluded **[API]**. **[By]** what kind of **law?** **[By]** one of **works?** No, on the contrary, by a **law** of **faith**.

- As a result, man cannot boast because salvation is by faith and not works.

[G] ²⁸ For we conclude **[PMI]** a.) that a person is **justified** **[PPN]** by **faith** **[apart from the works of the law]**. b.) **[A]** ²⁹ Or is **God** the **God** of **Jews** only? Is **he** not the **God** of **Gentiles** too? Yes, of **Gentiles** too,

- because there is one means of salvation – and it's not your works.

[G] ³⁰ since there is one **God** who will justify **[FAI]** 1.) **the circumcised** **[by faith]** 2.) **[S]** and **the uncircumcised** **[through faith]**.

- because there is one God of salvation – and you're not Him.

³¹ Do we then nullify **[PAI]** the **law** **[through faith]**? **Absolutely** **[AMO]** not! **On the contrary**, we uphold **[PAI]** the **law**.

- because there is no contradiction in salvation, the Law isn't effective to save, but it is possible to live to God's glory alone if you have been saved by faith alone, grace alone, and Christ alone.

Summation

As a result, man cannot boast because salvation is by faith and not works, because there is one means of salvation, because there is one God of salvation, because there is no contradiction in salvation.

Transition

- Can God forgive you without violating His justice?
 1. God's justice revealed in the Person of Jesus (Romans 3:21-26).
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Connect to the gospel

- Jesus is the mercy seat in **Romans 3:25**. It was on the mercy seat that once a year the high priest would sprinkle the blood of a sacrificed animal to make an atonement for the sins of the people. Jesus is that atoning sacrifice. By His sacrificial death Jesus paid the price in full which the holiness of God demanded, absorbing the full wrath of God, saving man from the condemnation of the Law. By His miraculous resurrection Jesus gives abundant life to those who repent for the forgiveness of sin.

Believers, how ought we to live?

- The declaration that you are righteous doesn't give you a license to sin. It is not a free pass to continue living in rebellion. Rather, now you have freedom to live a transformed life in the light of the righteousness that has been credited to you. You get to live in obedience and gratitude to God. Because you are no longer enslaved to sin you are free to live righteously. So pursue righteousness. Because now you can.
- Think about your daily interactions—how do you handle conflict or extend forgiveness? Living righteously could mean choosing patience and understanding when others wrong you or using your resources to bless those in need. In your workplace, it might look like working with integrity, even when no one is watching. Every moment is an opportunity to reflect the righteousness of God in your actions, turning ordinary life into a testimony of the extraordinary grace you've received.

Unbelievers, how ought you to respond?

- You may be declared righteous. Not by any good work you may or may not have done, but because of the Good work Jesus did in your place. He has paid the price your sin deserved, and so, right now, you may place your faith and trust in Him, and receive the free gift of eternal life.
- Consider this: have you ever tried to “fix” yourself, only to feel more burdened by guilt and shame? The message of the gospel is that you don't have to bear that weight any longer. Imagine standing in a courtroom, fully aware of your guilt, and hearing the Judge declare you innocent—not because of anything you did, but because someone else paid the penalty. That's what Jesus has done for you. You are invited not to achieve righteousness but to receive it as a gift through faith. Come as you are, trusting that Jesus' sacrifice is sufficient, and experience the freedom and peace that only He can give. Do not delay, come to Christ today.

Conclusion

- In a vast and thriving kingdom, a rebel rose against the throne. He broke every law, sowed chaos among the people, and even sought the king's life. When the rebel was finally captured, the citizens gathered, demanding justice. "He must pay for his crimes!" they shouted.
- The king, renowned for his perfect justice, summoned the rebel to his throne. His voice was firm as he pronounced, "Your deeds have defied the laws of this land, and justice demands your punishment." The people nodded in agreement, their cries for retribution growing louder.
- But then the king said something that silenced the crowd. "I will forgive the rebel," he declared. A murmur swept through the assembly, giving way to confusion and disbelief.
- "How can the king uphold justice and yet forgive the guilty?" they whispered.
- The king stepped down from his throne, his royal robe trailing behind him. "Justice demands a penalty, and I will bear it," he declared. The king ordered the guards to release the rebel and place himself in chains. He was led to the gallows, where the punishment meant for the rebel was carried out. The kingdom was silent, their questions answered: the king upheld justice by taking the penalty upon himself, and in doing so, offered mercy to the guilty.
- Just as the king in the story bore the punishment to uphold justice and extend forgiveness, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to satisfy the demands of His righteousness. At the cross, Jesus became our substitute, bearing the full weight of God's wrath for sin, so that we might be justified by faith in Him. Through Christ, God remains just while extending mercy to all who believe. Today, we stand before the same invitation—to trust in the finished work of Jesus and receive the gift of eternal life, secured by both God's justice and His grace.

Arrangement

- Can God forgive you without violating His justice?
 1. God's justice revealed in the Person of Jesus ([Romans 3:21-26](#)).
 2. God's justice applied in the lives of believers ([Romans 3:27-31](#)).

Argument

- Whosoever believes in Jesus' propitiatory sacrifice will be justified by God who is just.

Benediction