

McCoy Memorial Baptist Church

DATE: January 6, 2021

Wednesday Class: "Romans: God's **Good News** for the World"

A RIGHTEOUSNESS FROM GOD: PROVIDED (3:21-5:21)

What has God done about the world's problem?

Introductory Thoughts:

1. Justification: "The act of God whereby He **declares** a believing sinner **righteous** on the basis of the finished work of Christ on the cross." Each part of this definition is important.
2. Do not confuse justification & sanctification. Sanctification is the **PROCESS** whereby God makes the believer more and more like Christ (see Phil. 1:6; 2:12-13; 2 Pet. 1:3-11).

Overview: The argument of Romans 3:21-5:21 . . .

1. **3:21-31**—Paul teaches 3 basic truths about justification. First, its **SOURCE**, . . . where it originates. Second, its **BASIS**, . . . on what it rests. Third, its **MEANS**, . . . how it is received.
2. **4:1-25**—Paul illustrates justification by faith alone in the Old Testament (4:1-25).
3. **5:1-11**—Paul explains the experiential results that justified people enjoy (5:1-11).
4. **5:12-21**—Paul summarizes his argument to this point (1:18-5:11). He contrasts Adam and Christ. Adam stands for man's **CONDEMNATION** (1:18-3:20); Christ stands for the believer's **JUSTIFICATION** (3:21-5:11).

3:21-31 — <u>The apostle Paul teaches three basic truths about justification</u>

THE Source OF OUR JUSTIFICATION: God and His Grace.

THE Basis OF OUR JUSTIFICATION: Christ and His Cross.

What God accomplished at the cross (that is, thru the death of His Son in our place), Paul explains by three notable expressions in verses 24b-26 . . .

1. He has **Redeemed** His people (vs. 24b)
2. He has **Propitiated** His wrath (vs. 25a)
Lit. translation: "God presented him as a propitiation" (NKJV; NASB; ESV; HCSB). NIV note: "God presented him as one who would turn aside his wrath, taking away sin" or "as a propitiatory sacrifice."
3. He has **Vindicated** His justice (righteousness; vss. 25b-26)

THE _____ OF OUR JUSTIFICATION: Faith and Faith Alone.

Five times in this paragraph Paul underlines the necessity of faith (vss. 22, 25, 26, 28, and 30).

NOTE: It is not the _____ of faith that saves; but the _____ of faith.

Characteristics of this “righteousness from God” found in the gospel from verses 21-26:

1. It’s not _____: “apart from law” (3:21). It can’t be _____ (cp. 3:20).
2. It’s not _____: “to which the Law and the Prophets testify” (the whole O.T.).
3. It’s by faith _____ (*Sola fide*; vs. 28). “Alone” added in Luther’s German translation.
4. It’s by _____ alone (*Sola Gratia*; cp. Ephesians 2:8, 9).
5. It’s in _____ alone (*Solus Christus*; vss. 24b-26)

How the Cross glorifies God (vss. 27-31):

1. The cross _____ God’s _____ (vss. 27, 28)
2. The cross reveals God’s _____ (vss. 29, 30)
Three universal truths:
 - There’s only _____ God
 - All people are equally _____ by God for their sin (3:9, 19, 22-23).
 - All people are equally _____ God’s gracious salvation.
3. The cross upholds God’s _____ (vs. 31)
We don’t nullify the Law (denigrate it, cancel it) by the teaching of justification by faith, we uphold or establish the law. **The cross “upholds” the Law in three ways:**
 - By paying the penalty of _____ (cp. Matt. 5:17)
 - By fulfilling its purpose of _____ people to faith in Jesus (cp. 3:20; Gal. 3:23-24)
 - By providing believers with the _____ for obeying it (cp. Rom. 8:3-4)

ACTION STEPS:

1. For the believer: _____ the _____ to yourself every day.
“The victorious Christian life is a cross-centered life; and a cross-centered life is made up of cross-centered days. If we forget the cross, we’ll slide into one-of-three behaviors:
 - _____: basing our relationship with God on our _____.
 - _____: being more focused on our _____ than on God’s _____.
 - _____: basing our view of God on changing _____ & _____.
2. For the believer: _____ (the gospel) to others (see Rom. 1:15-17).
3. For the seeker:
 - The major subject of salvation is _____, not the _____.
 - The main emphasis of salvation is that it’s a _____, not a _____.

4:1-25—Paul illustrates justification by faith alone in the Old Testament.

Two Observations

1. Romans 4 presupposes familiarity with the biblical story of Abraham (esp. the Abrahamic Covenant). Three major provisions: 1) Land; 2) seed or offspring; 3) world-wise blessing.
2. "Credited" (logizomai) = 11 times (vv. 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24). It's a banking term and means "to put to one's account." When a person works, that one earns a salary and this money is put to the person's account (direct deposit). But Abraham did not work for his salvation; he simply trusted God's Word (the promise). It was Jesus who did the work on the cross, and it was His righteousness that was put to Abraham's account.

Four Assertions Regarding Abraham's Justification

1. Abraham was not _____ by works **(vv. 1-8)**
 - A. _____ is out: "but not before God"
See Eph. 2:8-9; Gal. 6:4; 1 Cor. 1:26-31 – "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord."
 - B. _____ is clear (4:3; cp. Gen. 15:6). What does the Bible say?
The NIV Study Bible Footnote on 4:3 . . .
"There is no mention of works in this passage. Abraham kept no law, rendered no service, and performed no ritual that earned credit to his account before God. His faith in God, who had made promises to him, was credited to him as righteousness."
 - C. The _____ are supportive (4:6-8; cp. Psalm 32:1-2)
Abraham's story is in the law section of the Hebrew Bible, & David's is in the prophets section. Here is the second witness referred to in 3:21.
2. Abraham was not justified by _____ **(vv. 9-12)**
 - A. The _____ of Genesis proves Paul's case.
Abraham received two distinct gifts of God, justification & circumcision, and in that order. First, he received justification by faith while he was still uncircumcised. Second, he received circumcision as a visible sign and seal of the justification which was already his.
 - B. The same situation applies to Christian _____.
3. Abraham was not justified by the _____ **(vv. 13-17a)**
 - A. It came _____ later (1445 B.C.)
 - B. It brings _____ (vv. 13-15)
 - C. The promise comes by _____ (vv. 16-17a).
4. Abraham was justified by _____ **(vv. 17b-22)**
 - A. Abraham's faith was " _____ " (v. 19)
 - B. Abraham's faith was in _____ (17b-22).
He is "the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were."