

The Truth about Salvation # 10

Romans 3: 21-31

In our study last week, and through much of the beginning of Romans, Paul has discussed the utter depravity of mankind. He has revealed man's condemned state in sin and his accountability to God. There is no doubt we are all born in sin and desperately need salvation.

If that were all we had, we would be without hope. God is holy and demands absolute righteousness to fellowship with Him. God's righteous nature condemns sin, but in grace, He offers a way of escape. Our text this evening deals with the hope we have in Christ through salvation. We don't have to remain in sin, separated and condemned before God. He provided the way of salvation, through which the old man of sin dies and we are resurrected anew in Christ. [2 Cor.5:17 – Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.](#)

Let's examine the [principles](#) Paul reveals in this passage as we consider: [The Truth about Salvation](#).

I. The Revelation of Salvation (21-23) – Here Paul reveals the offer of salvation to mankind. We discover that:

A. Salvation is Available (21a) – [But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested...](#) Prior to Christ dying on the cross for the sin of the world and the gospel of grace being offered, man had the law of God which revealed the need for salvation and pointed man to God. Through the law man saw his desperate need as he realized the holy nature of God, but the law could not redeem from sin. This was never God's intention. The law was not given to save; it was given to draw men to God. In Christ salvation was made available to all who come to Him by faith.

- God's grace is revealed for all humanity. We are not expected to keep the law in order to be reconciled to God. We are expected to embrace God's grace through the sacrifice of His Son. In Christ the way of salvation is extended, apart from the works of the law.

B. Salvation is Scriptural (21b) – [But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;](#) Paul taught something new to the Jew and Gentile alike. He preached the gospel of grace. The Jews sought justification through the works of the law. The Scripture they had revealed the law of God, while pointing to the coming of Christ to provide the means of salvation. Paul declares the gospel he preached is not contrary to the Word

of God, but rather consistent with the law and prophets. They bore testimony of Christ's coming! Each of the sacrifices offered by the high priests, the temple itself, and the prophecy of the Old Testament declared the coming of Christ as the sacrificial atonement for sin.

C. Salvation is Attainable (22) – *Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:* God dealt primarily with the Jews prior to the ministry of Paul. The law was given to them and the Gentiles were not exposed to Jehovah and His mighty presence as the Jews were. While God had dealt with the Hebrews for thousands of years, His plan of salvation would not be limited to them. Christ came to provide redemption for all, Jew and Gentile alike! Paul declared salvation was attainable by all who would respond to the gospel of grace through faith in Christ.

- Each of us should greatly rejoice for this principle of salvation! Had it been reserved for the Jews alone, we would be outside grace and without hope for salvation.

D. Salvation is Inescapable (23) – *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;* I do not say salvation is inescapable to imply all will be saved, but that none are beyond the need of salvation. All have sinned, coming short of the glory of God. In our sin we are condemned before God and destined for eternal judgment. There has never been one born in this life that did not stand in need of salvation by grace. It is our only hope for forgiveness of sin, reconciliation to God, and eternal life. Apart from salvation we remain in sin, unacceptable to God.

II. The Redemption of Salvation (24-26) – Here Paul discusses the redeeming principle of salvation. It affords:

A. Our Justification (24) – *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:* Salvation brings about justification for the believer. Once saved, we are justified in the eyes of God. This is very significant for every believer. It speaks of being declared righteous by God. We are now acceptable to God through salvation. The sin and guilt of our past is removed and we are declared righteous through the righteousness of Christ being applied to our account. Many have said justification can be described as “Just as if I'd never sinned!” We are made and declared worthy before God.

- I want to point out a word you might have missed. We have been justified *freely*. That literally means “without a cause.” It reveals we did nothing to merit justification or any of the grace

bestowed upon us. It is a gift of God's good grace. He chose to provide justification through salvation even though it wasn't earned or deserved.

B. Our Redemption (24) – *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ*

Jesus: Along with justification comes redemption. This too is very significant. It speaks of full deliverance from guilt and accountability for sin. It carries the idea of a slave being purchased from the taskmaster and being set at liberty, fully redeemed of his debt and bondage. In essence we are freed from the guilt and consequence of sin. Christ purchased our redemption as He bore our sin upon the cross. The debt and guilt we had has been erased and our account is marked paid in full. We no longer stand accountable to God for the sin we committed!

C. Our Propitiation (25) – *Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to*

declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; Jesus Christ our Savior stands as the propitiation for our sin. That is a large word with even greater implications for the believer. This literally speaks of an appeasement for sin. It reveals that Christ fully and eternally satisfied the debt for sin. God is holy and demands we be righteous if we are to inhabit His presence and enjoy eternal life. Our sin stood between us and God. In ourselves we could never obtain the righteousness God requires. Jesus fully satisfied God's demand and His righteousness is imputed to our account in salvation. We can enter God's presence, being reconciled to Him, through the appeasing and satisfying sacrifice of Christ!

- In Christ we experience the remission of sin. This means "*to pass over, to overlook, to put aside without punishment.*" Isn't that a blessing? In salvation the sin of our past is never to be remembered against us! Our sin has been put aside, apart from any punishment deserved. This is possible because Christ bore our judgment as He hung on the cross, bearing our sin!

D. Our Preservation (26) – *To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and*

the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. This sums up what Paul has just revealed. We are declared righteous through the sacrifice of Christ the Son and our faith in Him. It wasn't earned or deserved, but it was purchased by Christ and given of God. In Christ we are now acceptable to God and nothing will ever change that. The sacrifice of Christ was enough to fully and eternally purchase our redemption. All who come to Christ by faith in salvation enjoy acceptance of God. If God has declared us acceptable, who or what could ever change that?

III. The Reconciliation of Salvation (27-31) – Paul declares that we are reconciled to God in salvation through faith. Consider:

A. The Faith Required (27-28) – *Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.* ^[28] Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Paul reveals that faith is essential in salvation. There is no room for boasting in our works, good deeds, or in keeping the law. We are justified by faith in the finished work of Christ alone! Our works will never satisfy or please the holy nature of God, but childlike faith in Christ will.

B. The Faith Revealed (29-30) – *Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:* ^[30] *Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.* Paul had dealt with much debate over the availability of salvation. Some believed it was only available to the Jews. Paul declares it wasn't reserved for one race, and there was only one faith essential: faith in Christ. The Jews were justified *by* faith in Christ and the Gentiles were justified *through* faith in Christ. That is not a play on words, but a simple revelation of truth. Christ offers salvation to all who respond to Him by faith. Our salvation isn't an outward work, but an inward change. All who come by faith are saved.

C. The Faith Resolved (31) – *Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.* The Jews were concerned Paul's preaching of the gospel would make the law void. He declares that salvation doesn't do away with the law, but rather establishes it. Christ did not come to do away with the law, but to fulfill it. The law revealed our iniquity and need for salvation. It revealed the holiness of God. Through the law man realizes the great gulf between God's holiness and man's depravity. Christ bridged the great gap through His sacrificial atonement.

- Although we cannot fulfill the law in our flesh, we are justified in Christ! As we grow and mature in Him, we become more like Him. Christ lived a sinless life, never once breaking any point of God's law. Through victorious living in Christ, we look and behave more like Him. Salvation isn't a license to sin, and those who are genuinely in fellowship with Christ are more aware of their sin than ever before.

Conclusion: It is good to know that God didn't just condemn our sin and leave us to face the consequences and judgment we deserved. In Christ He made the way of redemption and reconciliation through salvation. I could never have lived good enough to earn salvation. Apart from God's grace, I would still be in sin. We all would. There is hope and salvation in Christ. I am not perfect, but I am not the man I used to be. I have been born again through Christ my Lord.

Do you know Christ as your Savior? If so, rejoice in Him and serve Him faithfully. If not, I urge you to respond to His gracious offer. He is the only way of salvation.