

Subject: *God's Righteousness in the Gospel*

Scripture: *Romans 1:14-17*

The Epistle to the Romans is all about the gospel, the good news about Jesus Christ and the salvation He provides for needy sinners. This is good news from God for every person.

The gospel is the good news that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures.

The gospel is the good news that Christ took our place and paid our penalty on the cross.

The gospel is the good news that God applies the benefits of Christ's death when we put our faith and trust in Him. This is the good news of redemption accomplished on the cross and applied to our souls.

The gospel is the good news that we are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone, and nothing else is needed.

The gospel is the good news that Christ saves us not only from the penalty of sin, but also from the power of sin and one day from the presence of sin.

The gospel is the good news that in Christ we are justified, we are being sanctified, and we will be glorified. This is the good news that what God began in us will be completed and perfected in eternity.

If I were to ask you what attributes does God display in the gospel and the salvation of sinners, what would you say?

You might say God's love, ***John 3:16*** *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

You might say God's grace, ***Ephesians 2:8*** *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.*

You might say God's mercy, ***Titus 3:5*** *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.*

You might say God's power, ***Romans 1:16*** *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

You might say God's faithfulness, ***1 Corinthians 1:9*** *God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.*

You might say God's righteousness, ***Romans 1:17*** *For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.* This is the very attribute of God that Paul mentions in our text. Here in the beginning of the letter Paul gets to the great theme of Romans: God's righteousness. This is at the very heart of the gospel and our salvation. From this statement in verse 17 we see the outline of the letter.

Rom. 1:18-3:20	The <i>need</i> of God's righteousness
Rom. 3:21-5:21	The <i>provision</i> of God's righteousness
Rom. 6:1-8:39	The <i>practice</i> of God's righteousness
Rom. 9:1-11:36	The <i>reception</i> of God's righteousness
Rom. 12:1-15:13	The <i>evidence</i> of God's righteousness

1. God's righteousness is REVEALED in Christ

A. God is perfectly righteous

Psalms 97:2 ...righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.

Psalms 145:17 The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

Genesis 18:25 Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

B. God requires perfect righteousness

Isaiah 64:6 But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

Romans 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one.

Romans 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

C. God provides the perfect righteousness that He requires

He does this through His Son Jesus, the righteous One. The ultimate problem is this...

How can a perfectly righteous God save sinners who deserve His judgment?

Proverbs 17:15 He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the LORD.

How can God judge sin and justify the sinner at the same time?

How can God be loving and forgiving without condoning us in our sin?

How can God honor His own character and save our souls at the same time?

His Son Jesus died in our place and paid the penalty for our sin.

2 Corinthians 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

2. God's righteousness is RECEIVED by faith in Christ

God's righteousness is revealed in the gospel "from faith to faith." That means from one person's faith to another person's faith and so on, and it also means that we are saved by faith in the beginning and it is faith all the way through to the end of life.

The whole issue of salvation rests on faith.

Romans 1:16 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

2 Timothy 3:15 *And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

Romans 3:21-22²¹ *But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;*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.*

In Romans 4, Abraham is the great example of salvation by grace through faith.

Romans 4:3 *For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.*

Romans 10:9-10⁹ *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*¹⁰ *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

Saving faith consists of three things: 1) knowledge (we know the truth about Christ); 2) assent (we agree with the truth about Christ); and 3) commitment (we place our trust in Christ).

3. God's righteousness is RELEASED through believers

This aspect of the gospel is the most overlooked and neglected, but it is the outcome of true salvation. The good news of salvation is that God takes us as we are, but transforms us by His grace and makes us what we ought to be. This is the lifelong process called sanctification.

The just "shall live by faith." By faith in Christ we are justified and we are sanctified.

Romans 6:12-13¹² *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.*¹³ *Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.*

Romans 6:17-18¹⁷ *But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.*¹⁸ *Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.*