

So Great Salvation (1)

Text: Romans 3:21-24

Introduction:

1. The Apostle Paul has concluded His thesis on the universal guilt and condemnation of mankind on account of their sin.
2. In this section, the Apostle now turns His attention to the solution to man's problem; justification by faith.
3. These verses answer the age old question spoken by Job, "*I know it is so of a truth: but **how should man be just with God?***" (Job 9:2)

I. The Revelation of God's Righteousness (Vs. 21)

A. The contrast (21a)

1. "but now" = glorious words
2. "righteousness of God"
 - a. Key phrase almost exclusively found in Romans.
 - b. Refers to righteousness connected with salvation and the Gospel
 - c. Refers to the righteousness of God that is imputed (credited) to the sinner by faith. "The righteous standing which God gives."
3. "without the law" = apart from the law. A righteousness that is not earned by observing the law. **Refer previous verse (Vs. 20)**. The law cannot justify someone. It can only condemn and show the seriousness of sin. God's law is like a mirror.
4. 'manifested' = made visible, made fully evident

B. The prediction (21b)

1. The law & the prophets testified of this righteousness
2. Types and shadows pointed to it

II. The Imputation of God's Righteousness (Vs. 22-23)

A. The reception of God's righteousness (Vs. 22)

1. 'faith' = this righteousness received by faith
2. Philippians 3:4-9 – "*the righteousness which is of God by faith*"
3. "unto and upon"
 - a. It is a given, provided righteousness. It is placed upon them as a robe, the white raiment given by Jesus Christ
 - b. Isaiah 61:10 "*I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; **for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.***"

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- c. Revelation 19:8 “*And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.*”
 - d. “His robes for mine, the wonderful exchange, clothed in my sin, Christ suffered neath God’s rage, draped in His righteousness I’m justified, in Christ I live for in my place He died”
 - e. “Jesus thy blood and righteousness, my beauty are, my glorious dress, midst flaming worlds in these arrayed, with joy shall I lift up my head”
- B. The necessity of God’s righteousness (Vs. 23)
- 1. “no difference” = only one way for all men, Jew or Gentile!
 - 2. “all have sinned” = reminder of the universal problem
 - 3. “come short” = present tense. Consequences of “have sinned”. I have sinned with the result that I come short and continue to come short and will always come short of God’s glory in my own strength. “They have come short, as in running a race, having now lost all strength (Rom 5:6) and ability in themselves to glorify God, and attain to the possession and enjoyment of His glory.” (Haldane)

III. The Provision of God’s Righteousness (24)

Note: Observe all the salvation words in this one verse.

A. Justification (24a)

- 1. Definition
 - a. Means to be pronounced righteous, clean, acceptable
 - b. The words righteous, righteousness and justified are all closely related. They all relate to the simple concept of ‘right’. The word ‘justified’ here continues the theme of God’s righteousness. In being justified, we are being provided the very righteousness of God Himself. (Sorenson)
 - c. “Justification is the declaration of a competent court that one tried before it is acquitted.” B.H. Carrol
 - d. How comforting to be declared righteous by God, rather than trying to affirm my own goodness: Prov. 20:6 “*Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?*”
- 2. Provision
 - a. ‘freely’ = provided totally by God, without earning. It is free and undeserved
 - b. ‘grace’ = first substantive mention of the word in the Epistle.
 - i. Means a favor done out of the spontaneous generosity of the heart without any expectation of return
 - ii. Was used in classical Greek to describe a favor done for one’s friend, never an enemy. In the N.T. it is elevated to

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a majestic level. The favor God did at Calvary was for those who hated him, his enemies. Col. 1:20-22 ***“And, having made peace through the blood of his cross...”***

B. Redemption (24b)

1. The meaning of redemption
 - a. A ransom price paid; a buying back; a deliverance effected by a price. Imagery of the slave market. Points to the “costly means by which this acquitting verdict is rendered possible.” (Moo)
 - b. Examples: slaves, prisoners, persons condemned, when they are delivered from slavery, captivity, or death, by means of a ransom.
 - c. Price paid by the Son to the Father
2. The price of redemption
 - a. Revelation 5:9 *“And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast **redeemed us to God by thy blood** out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;”*
 - b. 1 Peter 1:18-19 *“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; **But with the precious blood of Christ**, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:”*
 - c. Col 1:14 *“In whom we have **redemption through his blood**, even the forgiveness of sins:”*
 - d. Wesley: “Long my imprisoned spirit lay, fast bound in sin and natures night, thine eye diffused a quickening ray, I woke the dungeon flamed with light, my chains fell off, my heart was free, I rose went forth and followed thee.”

Conclusion:

1. Will you come and receive this great salvation that is offered to you freely by God?
2. **Illustration:** Imagine a man imprisoned in a medieval dungeon. He is clothed in rags and hardly fed. He is there as he has broken the law of his king and sovereign. Chains are upon his hands and feet and he has a cruel master who delights in his plight. Imagine one day this man is lead out of the dark dungeon into the bright of day. He is shown a table laden with the best food. He is offered a set of the king’s clothes in exchange for his filthy prison rags. He is offered a free, unconditional pardon for his crimes. To top it all off, he is even invited to become an adopted son of the king. Can you imagine the utter insanity and foolishness it would be for this man to turn away from such an offer and return to his imprisoned condition?