

LESSON 6: ROMANS 3:21-26
NOVEMBER 6, 2019

OVERVIEW

- . The heart of the Bible – Romans 3:21-26
- . A righteousness from God – Romans 3:21 – 26
- . Propitiation: The most difficult doctrine – Romans 3:25
- . Justification: The central doctrine – Romans 3:24-26
- . Redemption: The most wonderful doctrine – Romans 3:24

THE HEART OF THE BIBLE – ROMANS 3:21-26

- . This new section of Romans begins with the wonderful words “but now”
 - . Represents the turning point in God’s dealings with humanity
 - . The bulk of the first two and a half chapters deal with the ruin of the human race because of sin
 - . With no understanding of this ruin we wouldn’t fully appreciate God’s grace
- . These six verses bring us to the heart of the letter, maybe even the heart of the entire Bible
 - . “But now” implies that something of great significance has taken place
 - . These next verses represent the substance of the good news that Paul and other messengers have been delivering
 - . God has provided a righteousness of His own for men and women, a righteousness we do not possess ourselves
 - . This divine righteousness is ours because of God’s grace
 - . It is the work of the Lord Jesus Christ in dying for His people, redeeming them from their sin, that has made this grace on God’s part possible
 - . This righteousness that God has graciously provided becomes ours through simple faith

A RIGHTEOUSNESS FROM GOD – ROMANS 3:21

- . A righteousness from God, apart from the law has been made known
 - . What is the meaning of *apart from the law*
 - . The gift of God’s righteousness is given to us freely, not as a result of anything we have done
 - . This does not mean that the law has no value
 - . The law was given to restrain evil and to point to and show us the need for Jesus Christ

- . This gift of righteousness from God will now give us the very thing we lacked that will allow us to fulfill the law
 - . "I did not come to abolish the law, but to fulfill it"
- . Pagans of Paul's time did not need to know the law in order to recognize and receive the good news of Jesus Christ
- . Christianity is unique among all the religions
 - . All other religions suppose that there is something human beings can do for their salvation
 - . Only Christianity humbles us by insisting there is nothing we can do, on our own, to get right with God
 - . It's a power we don't possess – a condition we can not overcome on our own
 - . It's a gift we need to ask for, but one is given freely to a heart that truly desires it
 - . With this gift comes an obligation to set ourselves apart from the sin that still rules this world
- . Paul uses three great words to explain the good news of Jesus Christ and create the foundation of Christianity – Propitiation, Justification and Redemption

PROPITIATION: THE MOST DIFFICULT DOCTRINE – ROMANS 3:25

- . Propitiation is what the worshiper does when they present a sacrifice to God
 - . In the pagan world it was an act by which the wrath of the offended deity was appeased or turned aside
 - . In the world of the Israelite, it was their way to atone for the sins caused by violating the "law"
 - . The system of atonement used in Israelite worship was specific and laid down by God Himself, through Moses
- . The modern objection to this is that propitiation presupposes the wrath of God
 - . Many religious people today, including Christians have trouble with this thought because they believe God is loving
 - . Many believe all we need to do is learn of His love and receive His forgiveness
 - . God's love and forgiveness are very real and love is one of God's most enduring attributes
 - . Yet, God's wrath is equally real and Holy wrath is also an attribute of God
- . Appeasing God's real wrath
 - . What Paul has attempted to lay out in the first two and half chapters is the fact that it is precisely the wrath of God that is our problem
 - . We are under God's wrath because of our sin

- . If this wrath of God cannot be turned aside by someone or in some way, we are lost
- . God's wrath must be dealt with
 - . God's wrath is directed at sin, which by definition means apart from God
 - . The Bible teaches that God has wrath and is love at the same time
 - . "You shall have no other God's before me" – Exodus 20:3
 - . God loves us so much He lays it all out and gives us every chance to understand
 - . He wants our complete obedience
- . Human beings cannot appease God's wrath apart from God
 - . God Himself satisfies His wrath through His laws and systems of atonement
 - . The Old Testament describes in great detail how God satisfied His wrath with His chosen people through the system of atonement, even though He knew the Israelites had no means to escape their sinful condition
 - . This caused those people truly seeking God, great pain and consternation because they could never satisfy the ultimate goal, to be fully obedient to the law
 - . The good news of Jesus Christ is that God Himself decided to satisfy His wrath through the perfect atonement, the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ
 - . Through Christ, we now have a way to avert God's wrath, by knowing true righteousness that comes from the gift of the Holy Spirit
- . Propitiation, alone, doesn't satisfy God's wrath
 - . God knows our heart and whether there is a true redemptive desire
 - . With this great gift comes the power to truly set us apart from the sin that still lives within us and the responsibility to do so

JUSTIFICATION: THE CENTRAL DOCTRINE – ROMANS 3:24-26

- . What God is able to do for us on the basis of the work of Jesus Christ as it relates to God
 - . Only through Justification can we be made right, reconciled, with God
 - . The word Justification comes from the courts of law and describes the act by which a judge acquits an accused person
 - . It is a legal term that indicates the process of declaring righteous
 - . When God declares us to be justified, it is because He has already accepted Jesus' atoning death (propitiation) on our behalf
 - . Only God can declare us just – there is nothing we can do apart from God, to make us right with God

- . The source of our Justification is the grace of God – Romans 3:24
 - . The grounds of our Justification is Jesus Christ
 - . Justification is not to be confused with amnesty, which is a pardon without principle
 - . Justification is brought about, through our heartfelt faith in Jesus Christ
 - . Faith is the channel by which Justification comes to us
 - . Faith is not a good work – in fact faith is not a work at all
 - . Faith is nothing more than receiving what God offers

REDEMPTION: THE MOST WONDERFUL DOCTRINE – ROMANS 3:24

- . Redemption is a marketplace word and refers to the buying or selling of something
 - . It was used in ancient days with the buying of a slave to set him free
 - . In theological terms it means that Jesus has freed us from the slavery to sin
 - . Christ not only freed us from the bondage to sin and its power, He has also delivered us from death, the punishment God has set for our transgressions
- . Redemption describes what Jesus, our dear Savior, does for us personally
 - . He redeems us from sin, setting us free from its bondage by His death

NEXT LESSON – WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2019: ROMANS 3:27-31