

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Romans: Charter Of God's Salvation Grace
Part III: The Justification Of The Sinner By Faith Through Grace, Romans 3:21-5:21
A. The GRACIOUS Basics Of God's Justification Of The Sinner
(Romans 3:21-31)

I. Introduction

- A. Numerous gospels float about in the religious world, gospels that require some human merit or work be performed to some degree in order to earn or gain God's righteousness and have eternal life.
- B. The true Gospel of Christ is strikingly different from man's religions in its focus on **God's unmerited favor**, His grace, in the **salvation process**
- C. , and Romans 3:21-31 presents this classic truth (as follows):

II. The GRACIOUS Basics Of God's Justification Of The Sinner, Romans 3:21-31.

- A. Having shown how all men, the pagan, the moral man and the religious man (in Paul's case, the Jew) stood condemned before God (Romans 1:18-3:20), Paul launched into the **great relief** section of his epistle to clarify how God **GRACIOUSLY justifies** all such sinners **by their faith in Christ**.
- B. Beginning that welcome section, Paul laid out the **basics** of justification in Romans 3:21-31 as follows:
 - 1. The good news begins with the relieving announcement that God's righteousness is available to sinful man apart from the deeds of the Law that could only condemn him, Romans 3:21a with Romans 3:20.
 - 2. That this divine righteousness is truly available is certified by Old Testament writings in God's Word, writings of the Law and the prophets, Romans 3:21b. [We will later study how Paul demonstrated these writings verify God's righteousness is thus available, cf. Romans 4:1-25.]
 - 3. God's righteousness is available for all sinful men by faith **alone** in Christ as follows, Romans 3:22-28:
 - a. All men, be they Jews or Gentiles, or pagans, moralists or religious men, have sinned and come short of God's glory, standing in themselves eternally condemned before a holy God, Romans 3:23.
 - b. However, God **pronounces** the sinner "just", the meaning of "justification," by way of His grace, or His unmerited favor through Christ's substitutionary death on the cross, and he does so "freely" as the KJV puts it, or "gratis" or as a "gift," the meaning of **dorean** in Rom. 3:24a, cf. U. B. S. Greek N. T., 1963 ed., p. 537 with Moulton and Milligan, The Vocabulary of the Greek N. T., p. 174.
 - c. The basis by which God can rightly pronounce a condemned sinner "just" is provided by Christ's substitutionary death on the cross for the sinner and his sin, for that death fully satisfied the wrath of a righteous God against the sinner and his sin [the meaning of "propitiation"], Rom. 3:24b-25a.
 - d. The death of Christ not only covers the sins and sinners of the present, but it also carries away the condemnation of sin for all humans of the ages before the cross that God's forbearance had not judged until His wrath could be expended against them on Christ at the cross, Romans 3:25b.
 - e. Accordingly, when one merely believes in Jesus Christ and His atonement for him, God in pure righteousness can rightly pronounce the believing sinner "just" as God's gift to him, Romans 3:26!
 - f. This justification process completely eliminates any human boasting: the law of faith in this gracious justification of the sinner completely overshadows any law of keeping the works of the law as the latter can only condemn (Rom. 3:20) where the former justifies (Rom. 3:26), Rom. 3:27.
 - g. Accordingly, the sinner who believes, be he a pagan, a moral man or a religious man, is pronounced righteous by a holy God by faith apart from the sinner's efforts to keep God's laws, Romans 3:28.
 - 4. In this gracious program of justifying the sinner, God is Lord both of the Jew and of the Gentile as He pronounces righteous both the Jew and the uncircumcised Gentile by the way of faith, Rom. 3:29-30.
 - 5. Paul anticipated an objection by the unbelieving Jew that this format of justification only made the Jews' effort to keep the law vain, so he replied in advance that this justification format only establishes God's Law in providing the solution in Christ to which the Law was only aiming to bring men, 3:31.

Lesson: God JUSTIFIES, or PRONOUNCES RIGHTEOUS any sinner by faith in Christ and His propitious atonement for sin as His GIFT to the sinner due to His UNMERITED FAVOR!

Application: (1) May we lead the lost to see that COMPLETE justification is available as GOD'S GIFT through FAITH in CONTRAST to all self-help meritorious works by man! (2) May we REST in that truth from any religious pressure that suggests we must secure our eternal salvation by merit or works.