

Introduction:

- This passage is loaded with key theological terms among which *dikaisyne theo* (the righteousness of God) stands out.
 - It occurs in vs. 21, 22, 25, 26 (His righteousness) in 25 & 26.
 - And justify (*dikaioo*) occurs twice in vss. 24, 26
 - and the adjective (just) occurs once in vs. 26
- What we see in this is that Paul after laboring over our need for righteousness in 1:18-3:20 now prepares to show how God's righteousness brings salvation, and imparts salvation to the one who believes, Romans 1:16-17.

I. Back to the Good News!

- A. Paul reiterates the Good News as it relates to the OT. vs. 21
1. *"But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago."* (Romans 3:21, NLT)
 2. *"But now,"* signals a shift away from the last section and back to Ro 1:16-17. *"But now apart from the law."* Paul's thought.
 3. It marks a shift from the old era of sins domination to the new era of salvation. The contrast of these two thoughts are a major portion of Paul's theology. Not just in Romans but in all of his letters.
 - a) Justly condemned, bound by sin, powerless to escape God's wrath.
 - b) To being justified by faith. "No wonder Lloyd-Jones can exclaim, "there are no more wonderful words in the whole of Scripture than just these two words 'But now.' " Moo, D. J. (1996). NICNT Romans (p. 221). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
 - c) The wrath of God dominated the old era the righteousness of God dominates the new era! Righteousness of God means the justifying activity of God era!
- B. This new era, this righteousness has been and will be continuously shown forever from God. Yes! A way to be made righteous! This is a dominating for in God's interaction with humanity.
1. This righteousness has been manifested apart from the law! Paul does not even want to compare or contrast with OT righteousness. This proclamation stands alone with power in itself!
 2. The law has nothing to do with this righteousness! In this new era of salvation man is vindicated apart from the law!
 3. This Old Covenant is now obsolete, Heb. 8:7-13.

II. All Have Access To Salvation!

- A. *"We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are."* (Romans 3:22, NLT)
1. VS 22-23 show that men who are equally lost now have equal access to salvation through faith.
 2. The key is faith. Any man who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ gains access to the righteousness of God.

3. This faith, *pistis*, is consistently used in 3:21-4:25 to speak of the faith that is exercised by the people of God.
- B. "... *And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard.*" (Romans 3:22b-23, NLT)
 1. "God's righteousness is available only through faith in Christ, but it is available to anyone who has faith in Christ." Moo NICNT.
 2. This righteousness is available to everyone because everyone has sinned.
 3. Everyone has sinned not matter how good your heritage or life has been lived before God.
 - a) Because all have sinned - verb
 - b) All fall short - verb. Glory refers to the presence of the living God!

III. It is God Who Make Us Right With Him

- A. "*Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins. For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood... This sacrifice shows that God was being fair when he held back and did not punish those who sinned in times past,*" (Romans 3:24-25, NLT)
 1. vss 24-25a show the source of our salvation. The source of God's righteousness in the gracious provision of Christ as an atoning sacrifice is the theme of the third part of this passage
 2. Paul for the first time in Romans uses the word "dikaioo" to justify. The way Paul uses it is not 'to make righteous' or 'to treat as righteous' but to declare as righteous!
- B. To be justified means to be acquitted by God of all charges that could be brought against a person because of their sins.
 1. In Jewish law that did not happen until the end of the age when you faced judgement.
 2. But according to Paul it happens the moment one believes.
- C. We are justified freely by His grace. Grace is one of the most common theological terms that Paul uses. It describes the way God has acted in Christ.
 1. His action towards us is totally undeserved!
 2. No one can earn it and not one deserves it. God freely gives it to those who believe.
 3. We are redeemed by Christ who has paid the price of our redemption. HE IS NOT PAYING THE DEVIL A RANSOM!!!! HE IS SATIFYING GODS JUSTICE BY HIS DEATH!
 - a) "*He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins.*" (Ephesians 1:7, NLT)
 - b) "*who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins.*" (Colossians 1:14, NLT)
 - c) Payment was made at the cross but the redeeming work happens in justification when one believes!

IV. God Is Just It Is He Who Saves

- A. "...*This sacrifice shows that God was being fair when he held back and did not punish those who sinned in times past, for he was looking ahead and including them in what he would do in this present time. God did this to demonstrate his righteousness, for he himself is fair and just, and he makes sinners right in his sight when they believe in Jesus.*" (Romans 3:25-26, NLT)

1. There is a shift from the human work of believing to God work of providing justification.
- B. Paul shows how the atonement not only provides for the justification of sinners but also demonstrates the “just-ness” of God throughout the process (vv. 25b-26).
 1. Gods love and Gods wrath meet in the atonement. They meet at the cross.
 2. “*sacrifice for sin*” really refers to the ‘mercy seat’ inside the holy of holies. What was done in secret behind the veil is now done openly by Christ one and for all.
 3. The mercy seat is the place of the turning away of God’s wrath and in light of the 1:18-3:20 the understanding of the turning of Gods wrath is inescapable!
 4. For Paul, Christ now takes the place that mercy seat one had for the Jew. He is our mercy seat!
- C. God acts to demonstrate His righteousness and God declares sinners to be right with Him is all based on faith. Therefore it is God from start to finish, and faith alone that saves us.
 1. *sola fide*- by faith alone.
 2. *sola gratia*- by grace alone.