



1. The first work of Paul, as we have seen in studying [Chapter 1:18 to Chapter 3:20](#), was to bring the whole world under the judgment of God, guilty and helpless.
2. His second task is to reveal God's coming out in righteousness at the cross unto us.
3. If ever verses need to be memorized it is Romans 3:21-26 diligently read, pondered , and committed to memory.
4. It is God's great statement **of justification by faith.**

²¹ But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

BUT NOW

“**Now**” is *nuni*; says, "Logical, not temporal, *In this state of the case*. **Expressing the contrast between two relations—dependence on the law or non-dependence on the law.**" Vincent

The beginning, an explanation of something **heavenly, different** from our guilt and helplessness seen in ***Romans 1:18 thru 3:20***.

A stopping of one plan (law) completely and beginning a new plan (grace/faith).

apart from the Law

²¹ **apart from the Law** But now the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

Does God allow any law principle here when it comes to His righteousness being revealed?

The Greek puts to the very front this great phrase “*apart from law*” (*chōris nomou*), and thus sets forth most strongly the altogether separateness of this Divine righteousness from any law - performance, any works of man, whatsoever.

The great and most common error in setting forth God’s righteousness here, is, to allow law at least some place.

²¹ But now apart from ~~the~~ Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

Righteousness

Original Word: *dikaiosynē*

Usage Notes: is "the character or quality of being right or just";

it was formerly spelled "rightwiseness," which clearly expresses the meaning.

Vines

It is used to denote an attribute of God, e.g., [Rom. 3:5](#), the context of which shows that "the righteousness of God" means essentially the same as His faithfulness, or truthfulness, **that which is consistent with His own nature and promises.**

²¹ But now apart from ~~the~~ Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

Romans 1:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ For in it (the gospel) the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.”

Romans 1:18 (NASB)

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.

"Being witnessed" is *martureō* in a present passive participle; literally, "is having witness or testimony borne to it" or "is being attested" by the law and the prophets.

²² even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;

Does a believer need a personal standing before God in order to be righteous?

The saints are said to be [the righteousness of God, in Christ](#). Of course, self-righteousness simply shrivels before a verse like this! All is in Christ: we are in Christ—one with Him!

Dr. Scofield in his note on [Romans 3:21](#), says that the righteousness of the believer “[is Christ Himself, who fully met in our stead and behalf every demand of the Law](#).”

²² even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;

What is the righteousness of God in action?

God Himself acting **in** righteousness:

- a) Toward Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him as a man in the place of absolute honor and glory.
- b) In giving those who believe on Christ the same acceptance before God as Christ now has, inasmuch as He actually bore their sins, putting them away by His blood, and also became identified with the sinner—was “*made to be sin for us*” and, our old man was thus “crucified with Him.”

- a. Christ, now raised and glorified, is **Himself the righteousness of believers.**
- b. He had no connection with sinners until His death. He was *“separate from sinners.” “Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abides by itself alone.”*
- c. It is the Risen Christ who is our righteousness. *“Christianity begins at the resurrection.”*
- d. Now Christians find themselves spoken of **as the righteousness of God in Christ.** Not as “righteous *before* God,” for that would be to think of a personal standing given to us, on account of Christ’s death, rather than a federal standing, as in Him, united to Him,—which we are!

John Wesley said a wise thing indeed: *“Never think of yourself apart from Christ!”*

What does one have to be to be declared righteous?

Now to be or become “righteous *before* God”; to have or obtain a standing that will “bear God’s scrutiny,” is the fond dream of very many earnest Christians.

But however stated that idea of our obtaining a “**standing before God**” falls short, and that vitally, of Paul’s gospel of our being made the righteousness of God in Christ.

- It denies that we died with Christ; and that we have been made dead to the whole legal principle in Christ’s death.
- Accordingly, it leaves us under the necessity of “**obtaining a standing**” before God; whereas believers federally shared the death of Christ, and Christ Risen is Himself now our standing!

²² *even the righteousness of God through **faith in Jesus Christ** for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;*

Faith in the gospel of God concerning Jesus Christ as laid out at the beginning of the Epistle, is the true one here; for it harmonizes perfectly with this first great expansion in Chapter Three, of the announcement of [Chapter 1:1-3](#),

“the gospel of God concerning His Son”: the power of which is that *“therein is revealed God’s righteousness **on the principle of faith.**”*

Faith is simply the acceptance for ourselves of the testimony of God as true.

*²² even the righteousness of God through **faith in Jesus Christ** for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;*

In saving faith, then,

- You do **not** trust God to do something for you: He *has* sent His Son, who has borne sin for you. It's finished.
- You do **not** look to Christ to do something to save you: *He has done it* at the cross.
- You simply receive God's testimony as true, setting your seal thereto.
- You rest in God's Word regarding Christ and His work for you. You rest in Christ's shed blood.

³ for all *have sinned* and *are falling short* of the glory of God,

The idea is, "There is not a distinction."

"Have sinned" presenting a panoramic view of the human race as doing nothing except committing sin.

The word is *hamartanō*, "to miss the mark," thus, "to fail in obeying the law."

"Come short" is present tense, "right now come short." The verb is *hustēreō*, "to be left behind in the race and so fail to reach the goal, to fall short of the end, to lack."

Looking at the term God's righteousness from God's own side; then from that of Christ; and, finally, from that of the justified believer.

1. **From God's side, the expression "God's righteousness,"** must be regarded as an absolute one. It is His attribute of righteousness. It can be nothing else. He must, and ever will, act in righteousness, whether it be toward Christ, toward those in Christ, or toward those finally impenitent, whether angels, demons, or men.
2. **From Christ's side,** it is His being received by God into glory according to God's estimation of His mediatorial (mediator) work.
3. **From the believer's side,** the justified believer's side, the amazing declaration of God concerning us is, "*Him who knew no sin God made to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him*" (II Cor. 5:21).

We know that those now justified by faith in Christ **“rejoice in hope of the glory of God,”**

—meaning that state of being glorified together with Christ, which is the high, heavenly hope of the Christian.

It is in and through Christ alone that sinners ruined in Adam, and daily falling short of the glory of God, find redemption from sin’s guilt and deliverance from its power.