

# “An Expository Journey Through Romans 3:20-31”

## Rom. 3:20-3:31

1/15/23

Evident Life Church

- Read Rom. 3:20-31
- Rom. 1-3:20 shows you how you cannot become righteous, and Rom. 3:21-31 shows you how you CAN become righteous
- Rom. 1:18-32
  - Gentiles (Those without the law) are trapped under sin
- Rom. 2:1-3:8
  - Israel (Those who have been given the law) is trapped under sin too
- Rom.3:9-20
  - All are trapped under sin
    - Rom. 3:9- What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin.
      - Why? You were born in Adam, born into an enemy camp
        - Rom. 5:19a- For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners
    - Rom. 3:20- Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.
      - This is talking about the law, but it also applies to good works-No flesh shall be justified in His sight
        - You were born a sinner, unable to keep the law of God because of the weakness of your flesh (Rom. 8:3)
          - For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh
          - The law came to show your sin
            - The mirror and the sink
        - If you’re thinking you’ll get to heaven because you’re a good person, you’re in trouble
          - You can trick yourself into thinking you’ll get to heaven based on your works by forgetting all the bad works you’ve committed, or by lowering God’s standard to meet your own personal standard of goodness
            - Prov. 20:6- Most men will proclaim each his own goodness, But who can find a faithful man?
        - If you disagree with that, read Gal. 2:21
          - Gal. 2:21-“I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.”
      - Rom. 1-3 thus far is showing us that we’re all dirt bags, but seriously...
      - You have no ability on your own merit to be righteous before God
        - BUT...
  - Rom 3:21-22a
    - But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.
      - Righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed
        - Righteousness that isn’t based on your works/on obedience to the law

- Being witnessed by the law and prophets
  - NIV-To which the law and prophets testify
    - This isn't a New Testament idea, this was spoken of in the OT
      - Where?
        - Gen. 15:6
          - And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.
            - Law
        - Is. 53:10-11
          - Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities.
            - Prophets
- even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe
  - This righteousness comes through faith (belief) in Jesus-Just like it came to Abraham by faith
    - What is faith?
    - Look to Abraham as an example
      - God gave Abraham a promise, and Abraham took the action of believing the promise, which gave him the noun of faith
      - We too, take the action of believing Jesus is the Son of God and that His death atoned for our sin, and we have the noun of faith, which will then be accounted to us as righteousness as it was for Abraham
    - This is one of the beautiful parts of being a Christian, your righteousness isn't based on your works, it's based on the imputed righteousness of Jesus
      - Imputed Definition- logizomai- log-id'-zom-ahee
        - to pass to one's account, to impute
          - The righteousness Jesus had from living a sinless life is now passed into your account
      - Positionally we have been made righteous in Christ
        - 2 Cor. 5:21- For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
          - As we stand before God, He sees the righteousness of Jesus
        - Heb. 10:14- For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.
          - Positionally we have been perfected. As a Christian, you will never become more righteous positionally, or less righteous positionally, because the righteousness you possess has been imputed to you by Christ
        - Rom. 5:17- For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance

of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)

○ It is a gift

- Phil. 3:8-9- Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;
  - The moment you become born again, you will never become more righteous, or less righteous as long as you remain a believer
  - If you're truly a Christian and you've had a bad day (Stumbling in sin), you're not less righteous (positionally)
    - We are talking about the Christian, not one who was a Christian and given themselves over to a lifestyle of habitual sin (has drawn back unto perdition)
  - If you're truly a Christian, and you've had a really good day (Not stumbling in sin), you're not more righteous (positionally)
    - Which again is beautiful because your righteousness is stable in Christ.
- Rom. 3:22b- For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.
  - Justification- to declare, pronounce, one to be just, righteous, or such as he ought to be
  - Redemption- a releasing effected by payment of ransom
  - Propitiation
    - Hilastērion-(hil-as-tay'-ree-on)
    - This is a very interesting NT word
    - It is the same word that is used for mercy seat in the OT, which sat upon the ark of the covenant
      - <https://apologeticspress.org/contents-of-the-ark-of-the-covenant-2851/>
      - Strong's Definition- used of the cover of the ark of the covenant in the Holy of Holies, which was sprinkled with the blood of the expiatory victim on the annual day of atonement (this rite signifying that the life of the people, the loss of which they had merited by their sins, was offered to God in the blood as the life of the victim, and that God by this ceremony was appeased and their sins expiated); hence the lid of expiation, the propitiatory
        - Cont. that Christ, besprinkled with his own blood, was truly that which the cover or 'mercy-seat' had been typically
          - The mercy seat, which sat atop the ark of the covenant in the OT which was sprinkled with blood once a year on the day of atonement was typifying or showing forth Jesus' atoning sacrifice
          - Jesus was the expiating force that removed our sins when He was covered with blood, only He had to be sacrificed once for all time, because He has perfected us with one offering (ref. Heb. 10:14)
            - Lev. 16:29-34
            - "This shall be a statute forever for you: In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict your

souls, and do no work at all, whether a native of your own country or a stranger who dwells among you. “For on that day the priest shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins before the LORD. “It is a sabbath of solemn rest for you, and you shall afflict your souls. It is a statute forever. “And the priest, who is anointed and consecrated to minister as priest in his father’s place, shall make atonement, and put on the linen clothes, the holy garments; “then he shall make atonement for the Holy Sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tabernacle of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. “This shall be an everlasting statute for you, to make atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, once a year.” And he did as the LORD commanded Moses.

- Jesus was the expiating force that removed our sins when He was covered with blood, only He had to be sacrificed once for all time, because He has perfected us with one offering (ref. Heb. 10:14)
- to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. God needed to receive payment for the sins that were committed
  - He is demonstrating His righteousness by being perfectly just, but also merciful
    - Justice and mercy meet at the cross
  - Payment needed to be received for the sins that have been committed
    - If it wasn’t He would not be just
  - Yet because of His love, He has also become the Justifier
    - The Judge Himself provided the payment
      - Gen. 22:8- And Abraham said, “My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.” So the two of them went together.
- Rom. 3:27-31
  - Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.
    - No one has the ability to boast about their righteousness before God
      - 1 Cor. 1:29- that no flesh should glory in His presence.
    - Conclusion of the whole matter:
      - Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.
    - Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.
      - Now we have the ability to fulfill the law
      - We have been made righteous, and have become slaves to righteousness.
        - Rom. 6:18- And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.
          - We’ve become righteous, and now have the ability to walk in righteousness.