

Romans 3:1–31

Justified by Grace Through Faith—So That God Remains Just

Introduction: When Religion Runs Out of Answers

Have you ever reached the point where you realized that no matter how hard you try, you still fall short? That moment can either crush you—or save you—depending on where you turn next. Romans chapter 3 brings us to that crossroads. Paul strips away every refuge of self-confidence, every religious advantage, and every moral argument until there is only one place left to stand: the grace of God revealed in Jesus Christ.

Up to this point, Paul has made one thing painfully clear: possessing religious knowledge does not make a person righteous. Having the law does not justify. Performing religious rituals does not transform the heart. What God has always desired is inward righteousness—a righteousness that comes from Him, not from us.

Romans 3:1–8 — The Faithfulness of God Despite Human Failure

“What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God.”

Paul anticipates the obvious objection. If the law does not justify and rituals do not save, then what advantage was there in being Jewish? Paul answers clearly: the Word of God. God entrusted His revelation to Israel, and that is no small thing. Through them, God preserved His truth with astonishing care and accuracy, a trust validated even centuries later by discoveries like the ancient scrolls found near the Dead Sea.

But human failure does not cancel divine faithfulness.

“For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar.”

God remains faithful even when people are not. His truth does not rise or fall on human obedience. He is righteous when He speaks and just when He judges.

Paul then confronts a twisted argument: if human sin highlights God’s grace, does that excuse sin?

“Shall we do evil that good may come? Their condemnation is just.”

Grace never licenses sin. God’s patience is not permission, and God’s mercy is never an excuse for rebellion.

Romans 3:9–20 — The Universal Guilt of Humanity

“Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin.”

Paul now levels the ground completely. No group stands higher than another. Moral people, religious people, and irreligious people all share the same condition: sin.

“There is none righteous, no, not one... There is none who seeks after God.”

This is God’s diagnosis of humanity apart from Him. People may seek peace, meaning, or spiritual experience—but left to themselves, they do not seek the true God. Sin distorts every part of human life: speech, behavior, relationships, and conscience.

“Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.”

The law was never given to make people righteous. It was given to expose guilt. The law functions like a mirror—it reveals the dirt, but it cannot clean the face.

“Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”

Any attempt to earn righteousness collapses here. The law leaves us silent, exposed, and in need of rescue.

Romans 3:21–26 — God’s Righteousness Revealed in Christ

“But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets.”

Two of the most hopeful words in all of Scripture: **“But now.”** God has revealed a righteousness that does not depend on human performance.

“Even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.”

This righteousness is a gift, received by faith, offered equally to all.

“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.”

Justification is not earned—it is given. Grace is free to us, but it was costly to God.

“Whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith.”

At the cross, Jesus bore the righteous judgment our sins deserved. He shed His blood in our place. God did not ignore sin—He judged it fully in His Son. The resurrection then declared that Jesus is God, Savior, and Lord, and that the sacrifice was accepted.

“That He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”

God remains righteous while forgiving sinners. Grace does not compromise justice—it fulfills it.

Romans 3:27–31 — No Boasting, Only Faith

“Where is boasting then? It is excluded.”

There is no room for pride in salvation. If righteousness comes by faith, then boasting dies at the foot of the cross.

“Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.”

This truth unites all people under one God, one Savior, and one way of salvation.

“Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.”

Faith does not abolish the law’s purpose—it fulfills it. The law drives us to Christ, and Christ provides what the law never could.

Practical Application

- Stop trusting in your moral record or religious activity.
- Let the law do its work—lead you to grace.
- Rest fully in what Christ has done, not what you hope to do.

A Challenge for Believers

- Guard against subtle pride in spiritual discipline.
- Boast only in the cross.
- Live in gratitude, not guilt—obedience flows from grace, not fear.

An Invitation to Non-Believers

If you feel the weight of guilt, that is not rejection—it is invitation. Jesus Christ shed His blood for your sins. He rose from the dead to give you life. You cannot make yourself righteous, but God offers righteousness freely through faith.

Turn to Jesus. Trust Him. Receive forgiveness, new life, and restored fellowship with God today.

Romans chapter 3 leaves us with one clear truth:

No one is righteous on their own—but anyone can be made righteous through faith in Jesus Christ.

And that is the good news that changes everything.