

Sermon Title: The Divine Provision for the Condemned

Sermon Text: Romans 3:21-26

Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to recognize the divine provision of righteousness.

Sermon Proposition: There are 5 parts to divinely provided righteousness.

Introduction: Grace means nothing to a person who does not know he is sinful and that such sinfulness means he is separated from God and damned.

It is therefore pointless to preach grace until the impossible demands of the law and the reality of guilt before God are preached.

Galatians MacArthur New Testament Commentary, pp.323

A Christian is not one who simply buys “fire insurance” who accepts Christ just to escape hell. As we have seen repeatedly, true believers faith expresses itself in submission and obedience. Christians follow Christ. They are committed unquestionably to Christ as Lord and Savior.

John MacArthur
The Gospel According To Jesus

A healthy church is not a church that’s perfect and without sin. It has not figured everything out. Rather, it’s a church that continually strives to take God’s side in the battle against ungodly desires and deceits of the world, our flesh, and the devil. It’s a church that continually seeks to conform itself to God’s Word.

Mark Devers
A to Z Quotes

- I. The righteousness of God **revealed** for the condemned. V.21
- II. The righteousness of God **provided** for the condemned. V.22a
- III. The righteousness of God **needed** for the condemned. V.22b-23
- IV. The righteousness of God **credited** to the condemned. V.24
- V. The righteousness of God **demonstrated** for the condemned. V.25-26

I. The righteousness of God **revealed for the condemned. V.21**

The phrase “but now” marks a major shift in Paul’s argument. According to several interpreters verses 21-26 are the “center and heart of the whole book of Romans (1:16b-15:13). This paragraph is one long sentence in the Greek. The righteousness of God, is apart from any work of law, tradition, or morality.

Romans 4:15 because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law *there is* no transgression.

Galatians 2:16 "knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

Galatians 3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed *is* everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." **11** But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God *is* evident, for "the just shall live by faith."

Galatians 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. **2** Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing.

Galatians 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.

Having without question proven the universal sinfulness of man and his need for righteousness apart from law. Paul develops the theme first introduced in (1:17), that God has graciously revealed and provided a righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith alone.

This righteousness is revealed in the Old Testament, the Old Testament correctly understood is a witness of Jesus and His work of salvation.

II. The righteousness of God **provided** for the condemned. V.22a

Jesus Christ alone is the object and means of obtaining the gift of God's righteousness. The gift is for both the Jew and Gentile who by faith believe in Jesus Christ.

III. The righteousness of God **needed** for the condemned. V.22b-23

This statement looks back to (Chapter 1:18-3:20), it comments explaining that God can bestow His righteousness on all who believe, Jew and Gentile are both condemned for sin, therefore all humanity without distinction fall miserably short of living up to the divine standard of righteousness and glory.

All humanity has missed the mark that God intended for the human race and have lost the glory of the original creation.

Psalm 8:5 For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor.

Trusting in Jesus Christ starts the process of restoration of glory.

Romans 8:30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

2 Corinthians 3:18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

IV. The righteousness of God **credited** to the condemned. V.24

This section provides several ways Jesus' work on the cross atones for man's sins, because He was the perfect Lamb of God, He had fulfilled all the requirements of righteousness on behalf of believing humanity. (**Rom 10:5; Luke 1:6; Is 11:5; Heb 1:9; 2 Cor 5:21; Rom 4:11, 22**)

Isaiah 59:16 He saw that *there was* no man, And wondered that *there was* no intercessor; Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him; And His own righteousness, it sustained Him.

Matthew 3:15 But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit *it to be so* now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him.

1 Corinthians 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God-- and righteousness and sanctification and redemption--

Romans 10:4 For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

A. Believers have been **justified** freely by His grace. V.24a

"Justification" is a term from the courts. Sinners stand condemned in God's court, and yet He freely declares "not guilty" free of the penalty, power, and eventually the presence of sin. Anyone who places their faith in Jesus Christ. "Freely" means that God grants justification, a declaration by God Himself, solely based on His grace, not due to human merit.

B. The believer's **redemption** is through Jesus Christ. V.24b

"Redemption" is a term borrowed from the slave market. All people are slaves to sin by their fallen nature and identification with the 1st Adam, but people who identify with the 2nd Adam, Jesus Christ, are purchased by God and freed to new life in Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 9:15 And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

Isaiah 43:1 But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called *you* by your name; You *are* Mine.

1 Corinthians 6:20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Titus 2:14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself *His* own special people, zealous for good works.

This idea of redemption is a picture from ancient slave markets. It means someone pays the necessary ransom or price to obtain the prisoner or slave's release.

The only adequate payment to redeem sinner's from sin's penalty, power, and eventual presence is "Jesus Christ."

V. **The righteousness of God demonstrated for the condemned. V.25-26**

- A. God the Father demonstrates His righteousness by providing the acceptable sacrifice. V.25a
God sent forth the Lamb of God (Jesus Christ) to satisfy His justice. This great sacrifice was not accomplished in secret, but God publicly displayed His Son at Calvary for all to see.
- B. God the Father sent His Son to be a propitiation. V.25b

“Propitiation” is a term borrowed from temple rites, where the sacrificial animal figuratively comes under God’s wrath as it is killed. Jesus received God’s wrath on the cross on behalf of sinners.

By our faith in Christ, God’s wrath is credited as satisfied and believers are no longer under God’s wrath.

The term “hilasterion” was used for the cover of the Ark of the Covenant. Luther translated “mercy seat” [*Hebrews 9:5 and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.*]. On the Day of Atonement, the High Priest would sprinkle blood over the Ark of the Covenant to atone for the sins of the nation. By this rite sins were deemed expiated; people were reconciled to God and God’s wrath was avoided.

But human sins could not literally be atoned for by the death of animals [*Hebrews 10:4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins. 5 Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me. 6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. 7 Then I said, 'Behold, I have come-- In the volume of the book it is written of Me-- To do Your will, O God.'" 8 Previously saying, "Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them" (which are offered according to the law), 9 then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second. 10 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*]. Thus only Jesus could come to accomplish what no priest slaying an animal could ever hope to accomplish.

“full satisfaction of God’s requirements for atonement.”

1. The purchase price is the blood of Jesus Christ.
2. The means of access is faith.
3. The result sins passed over.

We all have experienced the restraint of the punishment that each sin and sinner justly deserves. This does mean that God was or is indifferent about sin.

God’s righteous character and justice demands that every sin and sinner be punished. God would have been just, when Adam and Eve sinned to destroy them, and with them the entire human race. But in His goodness and forbearance, He withheld His judgment for a certain period of time.

- C. God sent His Son to demonstrate His righteousness. V.26

The present time of the cross of Jesus Christ and the preaching of that message of Good News vindicated God, showing that He is just and justifier of the one who’s faith is in Jesus Christ.

The wisdom of God’s plan allowed Him to punish Jesus in the place of sinner’s and therefore justify those who are guilty without compromising His justice or His righteousness.

Conclusion: The Scandal of Grace

So it is today, this church, the church of Jesus Christ is not made up of good people. It’s made up of bad people, it’s not made up of people who think they’re righteous, it’s made up of people who know they’re not. It’s not made up of people who have attained to a certain acceptable degree with God. It’s made up of people who know they could never attain to an acceptable place before God.

It’s not made up of people who think they’re good. It’s made up of people who know they’re wicked. It’s not made up of people who have achieved righteousness on their own. It’s made up of people who have received righteousness from God as a gift. This IS the Gospel.

John MacArthur “*The Scandal of Grace*”