

Romans: The Gift of Righteousness part 1 | Saved by Grace | Romans 3:21-26

- 1. THINK:** We tend to shun law and requirements. We don't always like parameters. But, in the case of the gospel, law is good. Why is the Law such a great wonder for us? Where would we be without the Law bearing down upon us? **DO:** When was the last time you thanked God for every aspect of the Gospel, even the Law that birthed a way for us to see our need? Apply gratefulness to the Law and God's grand design in using the Law to give us eyes to see our state. Do this as a group and even talk through benefits of the Law.
- 2. THINK:** What words or descriptions would you use to apply to God, who used thousands of human years, enacting his divine forbearance and bringing about the Law and the Prophets, and then finally using those to culminate in the manifestation of his righteousness? What do you have to say about such a plan that was purposed from the beginning and what do you have to say about Him whose wisdom planned such a thing? **DO:** If God is this magnificent to span these thousands of years to bring about salvation of His people and all that was entailed in that, what does that mean for the hard situation you are in right now? How does the Gospel need to be applied in the depth of hurt you are experiencing right now? He who brought about such a great salvation must be worthy of your worship today in what you are experiencing. Verbalize that to Him and trust Him that he would not only save you spiritually, but draw you to Himself in this very real situation you are facing.
- 3. THINK:** What do you think of when you think of your past and your sin? If you are in Christ, what words would you use? Going through these last weeks in Romans, was it difficult? Why? What words in today's passage encourage you? **DO:** Memorize some of the key phrases in Romans 3:21-26. Rehearse them daily. Use them in your conversations with others that are discouraged in the faith or those that are discouraged without faith. How would a constant diet of putting these phrases in your mind impact your day and life?
- 4. THINK:** Why do you need the Gospel right here and right now? What has today brought you that makes you run to the Cross? If there is nothing that comes to mind, why not? How can you stay hungry for Jesus and what has taken place in you (if you know Him)? **DO:** Plan on turning away from trusting yourself this week and isolate ways that you have been self-dependent when it comes to being accepted by God. Plan ways to fold the sufficiency and the propitiation of Christ into your heart. Some ways suggested in the sermon are to 'looking to his work for you, seeing His death as your death' and 'embracing His life as your life'. What might that look like in your life from this week forward?
- 5. THINK:** Do you believe the Gospel is for every man and woman on the planet today? How might you live if you really believed that in your neighborhood, family and how would that really affect your prayer life and your giving? Can you imagine the millions worldwide that may never hear a sermon like today? **DO:** Treat the Gospel as you would if you had won the lottery. Who would you tell? Determine to rid your life of everything (every encumbrance as Hebrews 12: 1,2 puts it) that keeps you from living and breathing the Gospel to others and from living it out in your own life. How many things can you think of that keep you from applying the Gospel and living it out?
- 6. THINK:** When you have sinned, or when you have struggled, what gives you the greatest joy afterward? Is it the thought that you'll never, ever do it again, the thought that only God knows about it, or the thought that you can run to the cross immediately? When you have fallen hard, what gets you back up and running? **DO:** How many reasons can you write down, or Scripture references, that give you reason to head back to the foot of the Cross when you've failed? Is your list longer that gives reasons why 'you think' that you cannot go to God? Go ahead, make the list. See how many reasons God tells us in His Word to return, repent and draw near instead of stay away.

7. **THINK:** Why does the beauty of the Gospel point to the beauty of God? What does seeing the beauty of God, in turn, motivate us to do? We tend to think of beauty as tangible, physical and seen. How is the beauty of God different? **DO:** Talk through as a group how you have seen the beauty of God at your finest moments and at your worst. How has His beauty manifested itself as you've wrestled with your own sin-illness and your propensity to want your own way? Discuss how you've used the beauty of God to rescue you from such thinking.

8. **THINK:** Righteousness is a gift. Is it possible to have a gift and not enjoy the benefits of it? Have you ever been given something as a gift, but not used it, put it away or not seen its value? Do you ever do that with righteousness that God has imputed to you because He has justified you if you are in Christ? If so, what does that look like? Why the devaluing of what God has given you? What takes its place as your treasure? **DO:** Write a thank you Psalm to the Lord, expressing your gratefulness and valuing of the righteousness He has given you. Take some time as a group to really allow this to be done, maybe between meetings and then share the Psalms with each other.