



7/23/25

*Finally! We get to the good news!!! By faith in Jesus, we have hope and salvation. Last night at VBS, we had security standing by the church office doors, not allowing entry into the back hallway or the offices. But because I had the word "staff" written on my badge, I was given access. In the same way, no one is allowed entry through the gates of heaven unless they have the badge that gives them access. That badge is not given by works, but by faith in Jesus... which He freely gives by the authority given to Him from Father, as it says in John 17:1-2. This is good news!!!*

*Blessings,  
Jonna*

*Romans 3:21-31 ~*

*What do I learn about this good news from Romans 3:21-31???*

*Vs. 21-26 ~ "But now..." The verses that came before this were the scary news that all people are unrighteous before God, the Judge... guilty under the law. "BUT NOW... the righteousness of God has been revealed apart from the law." But now... my righteousness does not have to be based on my ability to obey the law. Did the law and the prophets point to the righteousness of God? Absolutely... In every command and every promise, the righteousness of God all throughout scripture pointed to faith in Jesus.*

*There is no distinction, no difference between the word of the Old Testament and the word of the New Testament... "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." If we're all shooting bows and arrows, every one of us... every human ever to have been born and ever to be born misses the target completely when shooting the bow. Every human throws an air ball. It doesn't matter where the ball lands, whether it's a centimeter shy of the rim or 10 feet shy, all are worth zero points. I can feel proud that my airball is closer than someone else's, or I can be ashamed that my airball is worse than someone else's, but it doesn't matter. They're all worth zero points.*

*Here's the wonderful news... Yes, "all fall short of the glory of the One who is the Judge AND*

*are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." These are some really important words.*

- I WAS hopeless and dead because I came up short of God's glory... which is the only way I could have access to eternity with Him, free of suffering and pain and sin.*
- By His grace, His charity and favor given to me even though I don't deserve it, He has justified me... pronounced me innocent, as if I hit the bulls eye, as if I swooshed the basketball without even hitting the rim. He has placed me in the legal position of "justified..." just as if I'd never sinned, just as if I'd always obeyed, just as if I am completely perfect like Jesus.*
- This is the free gift that cost Jesus everything. He redeemed me. He released me from the debt I could never pay. He became the "propitiation", the replacement payment for me. It was only by His perfect, unblemished blood poured out for me. O Lord, please don't let me take this for granted!!!*
- The only part I play in all of this is that I RECEIVE His gift by FAITH. And even my faith is a gift from God (Hebrews 12:2).*

*Why did God make sure that all scripture would point to Jesus? Jesus is the display of righteousness. Before Jesus came, God passed over former sins in His "forbearance." Sin was everywhere. It still is. But God did not bring down His condemnation on those who came before Jesus. He patiently endured while He continued to point to Jesus, so that all who would receive His gift would never face the condemnation we deserve.*

*Now... I can see clearly His righteousness fulfilled in Jesus... for a purpose... that I might put my faith in the One who fulfilled the demand for justice AND poured out His mercy by justifying all who believe in Him. God HAD to demand the righteous requirement of the law because He is holy. He knew I couldn't accomplish it, and He had compassion. So He showed mercy to me by letting His Son be my sacrifice. Justice and mercy meet at the cross. My job is to put my faith, my confidence, my commitment fully in His Son.*

*Vs. 27-31 ~ So... do I have any reason to be proud or boast about myself??? Does a painting get to take credit for the beautiful artistry of the painter? Does the patient get to take credit for the intricate work of the heart surgeon? The only credit is that I trust the one doing the work. There is no reason to boast. No work that I've done gives me reason to boast. No amount of obedience to the law gives me reason to be proud... because I still can't do it perfectly. The first commandment of the law is that I "shall have no other gods before Him." Nothing shall ever be more important to me than God. Well... I broke that long before I could ride a bike... and millions of times after. I have no reason to boast.*

*The only law that saves me is the law of faith... trust... confidence in Jesus. I am justified by faith APART from the law. My ethnicity doesn't matter... Jew or Gentile... God is the God over all... whether I acknowledge Him or not. God is ONE God... not a different God to different*

*people based on their physical bloodline. There are NOT many roads that lead to heaven. There is one. The circumcised (Jews) will be justified BY FAITH. The uncircumcised (Gentiles) will be justified through the SAME FAITH. Faith in the redeeming blood of Jesus Christ.*

*So... does all of this mean that because Jesus paid for my sin I no longer have to be obedient to God's law? Not at all! But it's a new way of obedience that takes away fear, shame, and condemnation. It's obedience through faith. It is by faith that I'm ABLE to be obedient to God's word.*

*Here's my path to obedience...*

*Through Jesus' sacrifice for me → He offers me His free gift of justification → I RECEIVE His gift by faith in Him → the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in me and seal me for the day of redemption when God will take me home (Ephesians 3:13-14, 4:30) → the Holy Spirit leads me and helps me to put to death the things in my flesh that keep me from being obedient to God (Romans 8:13).*

*God's goal was never to free me so that I would be more enslaved to the enemy. The more I grow in faith through the Perfecter of my faith, the more I grow in love, hope, peace, contentment, joy, the peaceful fruit of righteousness, and relationship with Him. O Lord, the word "gospel" means "good news." This is amazing, wonderful, priceless news!!! Please perfect this gift of faith in me so that I have the strength to die to myself, take up my cross every day, and follow You.*