

***Bible Study on
the Epistle to the
Romans***

**Elder Paul Brown
June 10, 2015**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26)

- **Being justified (v. 24) probably connects with v. 22b, and reiterates the bright side of the “no distinction” theme, while v. 23 looks at the dark side of it.**
- **The verb justified (*dikaioo*) was a judicial term for a judge declaring a person innocent of whatever charges were levied against him. [Case dismissed!!!]**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26)

- **A sinner is rightly charged with breaking God's law.**
- **When a sinner trusts Christ for salvation (Acts 2:38), God declares him or her not only innocent of that charge (i.e., He "justifies" them), but as having kept the standard because of the relationship that is established with Him through Christ (Rom 8:4; 2Cor 5:21).**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26)

- **By God's declaration, the sinner is "put right" with God and possesses the status of "righteousness" on the basis of the favourable verdict rendered by the divine Judge.**
- **This is no legal fiction as is sometimes argued.**
- **When a judge declares innocent an individual charged with a crime, that declaration has a profound impact upon the one who was charged.**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) - GRACE

- **Grace:**
- **Grace denotes the character quality of benevolence that leads a benefactor to bestow a favour upon another.**
- **God's unmerited favor.**
- **God's Riches At Christ's Expense**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

1. **Grace is a part of the character of God**
 - **Ephesians 1:5-12**
 - **Ephesians 2:1-10**
- **The grace of God was that attribute which most displeased Jonah – because grace was granted to the enemies of Israel**
- **“Please Lord, was not this what I said while I was still in my own country? Therefore, in order to forestall this I fled to Tarshish, for I knew that Thou art a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity” (Jonah 4:1-2)**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- David sinned by numbering the Israelites, contrary to the advice of Joab (1 Chronicles 21:1ff.).
- God rebuked David through the prophet Gad, giving him a choice of one of three calamities: three years of famine; three months of defeat by the hand of their enemies; or three days at the hand of the Lord (verses 11-12).
- David's response reveals his grasp of the grace of God:
- "I am in great distress; please let me fall into the hand of the Lord, for His mercies are very great. But do not let me fall into the hand of man" (verse 13).

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- The gracious character of God was fully manifested in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the revealer of the Father (John 1:18), the exact representation of the Father (Hebrews 1:3):
- And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. ... For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ (John 1:14, 17).
- Paul can therefore write to Titus:
- For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men (Titus 2:11).

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- In both His words (Luke 4:22) and His works (Matthew 9:36; 14:14; Mark 6:31, etc.) Jesus demonstrated grace.
- He did not come to judge or to condemn, but to forgive and to save (John 3:16-17; 8:10-11).
- We can do nothing else but conclude that God is, was, and will ever be a God of grace. That is His character, and it is therefore the ultimate cause of His graciousness toward men.

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

2. Grace is epitomized on the cross of Calvary

- Grace is not merely a part of the plan of redemption, but it is the silver cord that runs through every facet of the work of redemption
- Ephesians 1:4
- Romans 11:5

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- The entire work of Christ in coming to earth, dying for sinners, and being crowned with glory, is said by the writer to the Hebrews to be “by the grace of God” (Hebrews 2:9).
- In no way was this prompted by man (cf. Romans 10:6-8).
- Our redemption is “according to the riches of His grace” (Ephesians 1:7).

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- Our calling (cf. Romans 8:28, 30), the sovereign act of God by which we are drawn irresistibly to Him, is said to be “through His grace” (Galatians 1:15).
- Justification, that judicial pronouncement that we are innocent of any guilt and whereby we are declared righteous through the work of Christ, is a gift of His grace (Romans 3:24; Titus 3:7)

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- **When it comes to salvation, men believe by the grace of God:**
- **And when he wanted to go across to Achaia, the brethren encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him; and when he had arrived, he helped greatly those who had believed through grace (Acts 18:27)**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- **The gospel is the “gospel of grace” (Acts 20:24)**
- **The Scriptures are the “word of His grace” (Acts 14:3; 20:32).**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

3. While grace has always existed as a part of the character of God and was epitomized on the cross of Christ, it is expressed in a wide variety of forms

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- **Common grace is that benevolence which is poured out upon all men, regardless of their spiritual condition:**
- **Matthew 5:44-45**
- **Acts 14:16-17**
- **He is also gracious in delaying judgment, thereby giving men ample time to repent (2 Peter 3:9)**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- **Securing grace is that manifestation of God's benevolence by which Christians are kept secure in spite of sin.**
- **Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God (Romans 5:1-2).**
- **Through Silvanus, our faithful brother (for so I regard him), I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it! (1 Peter 5:12).**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

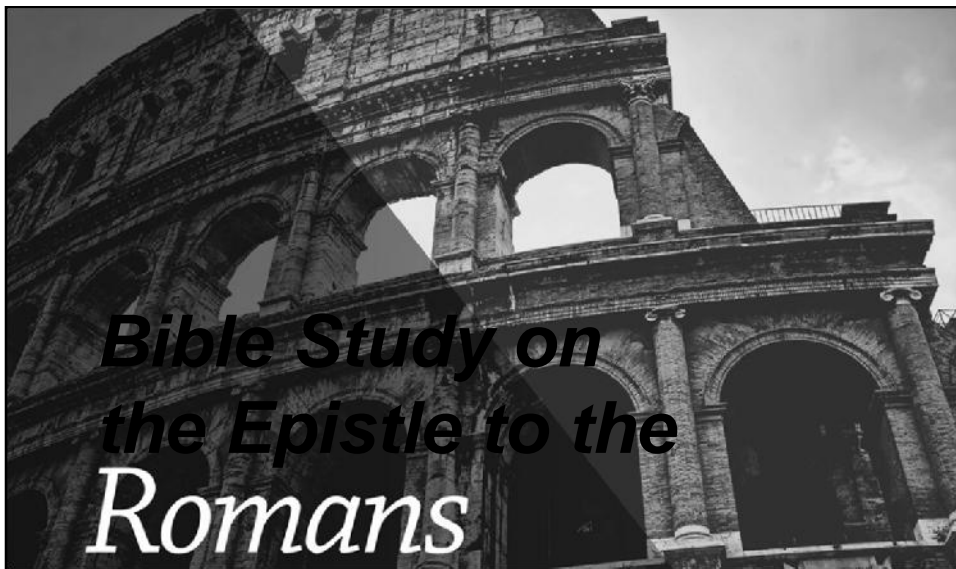
- **Sanctifying grace is that grace which works within the true believer in such a way as to bring growth, maturity, and progress in the process of becoming Christ-like:**
- **Now when the meeting of the synagogue had broken up, many of the Jews and of the God-fearing proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, were urging them to continue in the grace of God (Acts 13:43).**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- Sanctifying grace
- But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me (1 Corinthians 15:10).
- But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. (2 Peter 3:18)

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- Serving grace is the enablement to minister in such a way as to manifest the life of our Lord through the saints as members of His body.
- It refers to acts of generosity and giving (cf. Acts 4:33ff.; 2 Corinthians 8:1ff.).
- It specifically refers to spiritual gifts (the term “gift” is a derivative of the word “grace”).
- But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift (Ephesians 4:7).
- As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God (1 Peter 4:10).



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June 17, 2015**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- Sustaining grace is grace given at special times of need, especially during adversity or suffering.
- And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me (2 Corinthians 12:9).
- Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:16).
- But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, “God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble” (James 4:6).

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

4. Grace is pure

- **If we were to describe grace to the chemist, we would say that grace is an element, not a compound.**
- **Grace is never a mixture of divine benevolence and human effort:**
- **Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as a favour but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness (Romans 4:4-5).**
- **But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace (Romans 11:6)**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- **And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father Isaac; for though the twins were not yet born, and had not done anything good or bad, in order that God's purpose according to His choice might stand, not because of works, but because of Him who calls, it was said to her, "The older will serve the younger" (Romans 9:10-12).**
- **It was God's choice that Jacob rule over Esau without regard to any works which either would do; in fact, Jacob was chosen even before he was born. A longer look at the life of Jacob would indicate that God's purposes for Jacob's life were accomplished in spite of him**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

5. Grace is sovereign.

- **Since we have no claim on God's grace and cannot contribute anything to it, then grace must be sovereignly bestowed.**
- **As God said to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion" (Exodus 33:19; cf. Romans 9:15).**
- **The necessary conclusion is that which follows in Romans 9:16:**
- **So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs but on God who has mercy.**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

5. Grace is sovereign.

- **Some are greatly troubled by the fact that grace is bestowed sovereignly, but what other basis is there for its distribution?**
- **In Romans 9:14 Paul asks the question: Can God be just when grace is given to some but not to others?**
- **He answers his own question by reminding the reader that justice can only condemn all men, for all have sinned.**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

5. Grace is sovereign.

- **We dare not plead for justice with God, for justice can only be satisfied by our condemnation.**
- **Grace operates on a totally different basis.**
- **Grace does not give men what they deserve, but what God delights to give, in spite of their sin.**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

5. Grace is sovereign.

- **God is only unjust if He withholds from men benefits which they rightfully deserve, but He is gracious in bestowing upon men salvation and blessings which they could never merit.**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

6. While the Law is the standard of righteousness, grace is the source of righteousness.

- **While the Law defines righteousness, only grace delivers it.**
- **The Law was never intended to be a means of obtaining grace; it was given to demonstrate to men that grace was desperately needed:**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- **Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, that every mouth may be closed, and all the world may become accountable to God; because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin. But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets (Romans 3:19-21).**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- **At its heart, legalism is a humanly-devised system whereby a man may strive to produce his own righteousness by rigid adherence to a prescribed code of conduct.**
- **It is almost always external in nature, that is, it evaluates actions rather than attitudes and motives (cf. Matthew 6:1ff.).**
- **Worse yet, legalism tends to lower the standards God has set.**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- **In the Sermon on the Mount our Lord persisted in raising the standards set by the scribes and Pharisees, not lowering them (cf. Matthew 5:17-48).**
- **Because of their lowering of God's standards the rich young ruler could unashamedly say to Jesus, "Teacher, I have kept all these things from my youth up" (Mark 10:20).**
- **What an incredible thing to be able to say. Only a legalist could do so.**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- While the legalists of Jesus' day placed burdens on men that they could not bear (Matthew 23:4), they found all sorts of loopholes by which to avoid the demands their traditions made on others (Matthew 23:16-24).
- Jesus lightened the burden, not by lowering God's standards, but by providing enablement to meet them (Matthew 11:28-30; Romans 8:1-4).

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

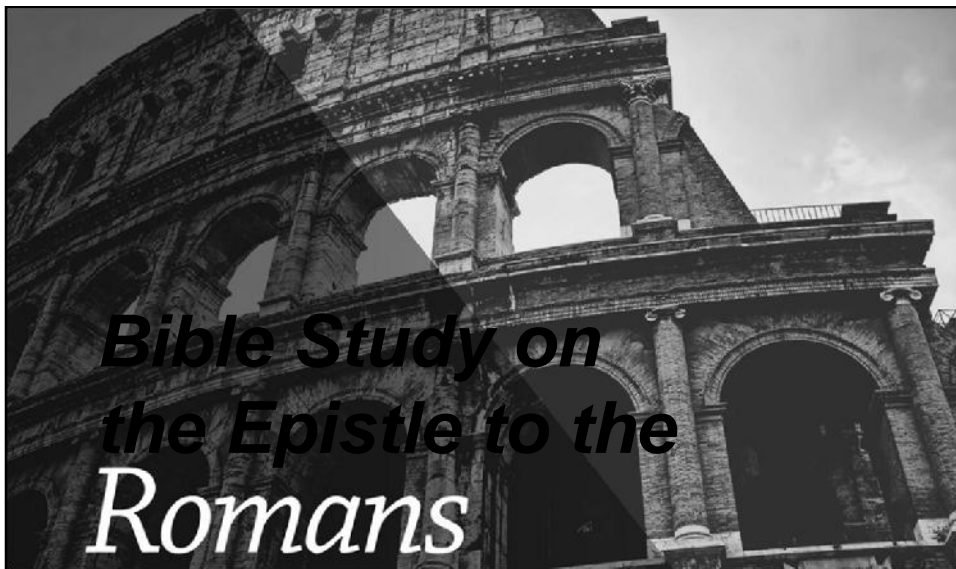
- No matter how pious legalism appears on the outside, it dishonors God by revealing a deep-seated distrust of God.
- Why do men insist upon putting agreements in writing?
- Why are legal contracts necessary?
- For only one reason—men are fallible.

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- At best, we tend to forget the things we have committed to do.
- At worst, we never intended to do them in the first place.
- A legal contract gives one man a basis for forcing another to do what he has promised.

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- We need to remind ourselves that the demands of the Law are only required where evil men are involved (cf. 1 Timothy 1:9-10).
- Where grace prevails, Law will only restrict gracious activity, not promote it.
- Legalism cannot co-exist with grace:
- You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by Law; you have fallen from grace (Galatians 5:4).
- For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under Law, but under grace (Romans 6:14)



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A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

7. Grace is given only to the humble

- **James 4:6 "But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."**
- **1 Peter 5:5 "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- **Grace is the goodness of God on behalf of sinners who humbly acknowledge their own deficiency and thus their dependence upon God's grace for forgiveness and salvation**
- **Pride offended often turns to envy (cf. Matthew 27:18; Mark 15:10)**
- **In the case of Jesus, since the religious leaders of Israel couldn't persuade Him to endorse their ideology, they concluded that He must be done away with (cf. John 11:47-50).**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- **Acts 7:9 "And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him,"**
- **Acts 13:45 "But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming."**
- **Acts 17:5 "But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people."**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

8. While sin is an occasion for grace, grace is never to be an occasion for sin.

- **Many of the objections to the biblical doctrine of grace originate from the abuses of this doctrine in the lives of Christians.**
- **Any biblical doctrine can be misapplied in such a way as to justify sin in our lives.**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- **In Romans 5 Paul taught that “where sin increased, grace abounded all the more” (verse 20), but he quickly went on to say that this is no incentive to careless living:**
- **What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase? May it never be! (God forbid!) How shall we who died to sin still live in it? (Romans 6:1-2)**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- **We who have died to sin cannot casually and carelessly persist in sin, for it is inconsistent with our new life in Christ.**
- **Grace must never be used as an excuse for sin:**
- **Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God (1 Peter 2:16).**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- 9. Grace is always granted in harmony with God's other attributes**
- **It is possible to misunderstand the grace of God by supposing that grace somehow is granted at the expense of God's holiness or His justice.**
 - **Nothing could be further from the truth.**
 - **Grace does not set aside the requirements of justice; it satisfies them.**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- The Christian is no longer guilty before God and need not stand under the condemnation of God for sin.
- But someone does have to pay the penalty for sin.
- For the Christian, that person is our Lord Jesus Christ:
- He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21).

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- In Romans 3 Paul dealt with the need for grace to be shown in such a way as not to violate the justice 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.” (Romans 3:24-26)

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- **Grace, then, meets the demands of justice and holiness rather than to set them aside.**
- **Grace is never granted at the expense of any of God's attributes.**
- **This is a comforting thought which we should pause to ponder.**
- **Can you possibly conceive of a God who is all-powerful and all-knowing and yet whose power could be employed at a mere whim?**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

10. Grace is both positive and negative in what it gives

- **Grace is the outpouring of God's unsolicited and undeserved goodness upon sinful men.**
- **This goodness, however, may not always be recognized, for sometimes it comes in the form of pain and suffering.**
- **Paul wrote to the Philippian saints:**
- **For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake (Philippians 1:29).**

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- The word “granted” (*gifted*) is the verb form of the word “grace.”
- Few would disagree that belief in Christ is a gift of God’s grace, but Paul insists that suffering is every bit as much a gift from God.
- This is so because trials are sent into the life of the saint in order to perfect his faith and to draw him nearer to the Saviour (cf. Hebrews 12:1ff.; James 1:2-4).
- In other words, God is gracious to us not only in what He provides, but also in what He prohibits.

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- What can we learn from the account in the garden of Eden?
- Adam and Eve were told that they could freely eat of every tree of that garden, except one.
- That was a provision of grace.
- What an abundance of good things that garden must have contained.
- But God also forbade them to eat of the fruit of one tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

A. Righteousness Is Available from God (3:21-26) – GRACE

- **Now Satan successfully diverted the attention of Adam and Eve from the gracious provision of God to His one prohibition.**
- **What they did not realize (and Satan surely did not point out) was that God was not only gracious in the provision of the garden with all of its delights, but also in the prohibition not to eat of the one tree.**
- **How painful for Adam and his wife and for mankind were the consequences of partaking of what God prohibited!**