

**Justified by Faith - Romans 3:21-31**  
**First Southern Baptist Church - February 1, 2023**

**Introduction:**

1. What is our hope apart from the law?
2. Verse 20 - the law is
  - by the law is “the knowledge of sin”
  - a searchlight
  - a schoolmaster
  - a thermometer
  - a mirror - James peers into the perfect “law” of liberty (James 1:24-25)
3. Same:
  - sin
  - judgment
  - need
  - salvation
4. Issues at play:
  - saved by faith, or works (to include circumcision)
  - saved the Jews or the Gentiles as well?
  - what part does the law play, then?
5. The flow
  - up to verse 21 Paul has concluded all under sin
  - from verse 21-31 Paul concludes we are “justified by faith”*
  - after chapter 3 Paul begins to deal with a specific person (Old Testament personality - Abraham) who was saved without the law in the Old Testament

**I. “But Now” (21-23)**

1. A new kind of righteousness - without the law
2. “Manifested” - revealed - a thing undiscoverable by man
3. “Witnessed” by law and prophets
  - the whole of the Old Testament
4. What kind of righteousness? (22)
  - A. Of God
  - B. By faith of Jesus
  - C. Unto all... and upon all who believe
    - “there is no difference” emphasis is still on “all”
  - D. Received as a gift
5. Why so? (23)
  - A. For all have sinned (emphasis is still on all)
  - B. Come short - the most common words for sin - to “come short”

**II. What does “Believe” in verse 22 Mean? (24-25)**

1. “Justified” means to be declared right with God
  - A. The image is judicial - a court room
  - B. “Justified” is a divine act - not a human attainment
2. “Freely” - how? By His grace

- !!). Three metaphors used  
Delivered (24)  
Redemption (24)  
Propitiation (25)
- !!). Note the language used:  
 -“justified” is the language of the court (pardon)  
 -“redemption” is the language of the slave market (liberation)  
 -“expiation” is the language of the altar (atonement)
3. Through the **redemption** in Jesus  
 -means to “buy back”  
 -at the slave market (1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23; 2 Pet. 2:1)  
 -to redeem land... buy back
4. God sent to be “**propitiation**” for our sins (25) - three meanings:  
 A. To appease an angry god - (for the pagans... it meant to buy off an angry god and purchase his love) - through Jesus we are delivered from the wrath of God  
 B. To expiate - or atone or extinguish - through Jesus we have our sins removed  
 C. To receive mercy - through Jesus we receive blood at the Mercy Seat (HOH)
5. He “declares” His righteousness on anyone who accepts Jesus  
 A. Jesus is the turning point  
 B. Pivotal things  
     Jesus is God’s extended offer of forgiveness  
     (God’s contract is fulfilled in Him)  
     Through faith... same for Gentiles and Jews  
     (Abraham believed in chapter 4 and righteousness came to him)
6. In His blood (25)  
 -at Lev. 16:14 we are told of the cover over the ark - below the cover are the laws that the people had violated. When blood was sprinkled upon this cover it ceased to be a *seat of judgment* and became a *seat of mercy*

### III. He is Just (26-31)

1. Declaring that He is just and the justifier  
 A. Of who? - them that believe  
 B. To declare “just” is to declare “right”  
     1) it is “right” that man should be held accountable for sin  
     2) it is “right” that payment be made  
     3) it is “right” that God meet His own standards (God cannot and will not look over His own standards)  
 C. At the same time  
     God demonstrates His character - He is Just  
     Provides for our sin - He is the Justifier
2. To exclude boasting (27) - boasting is now impossible  
 -the reference is the Jews glorying in their having the law and keeping the law (2:17)
3. By what law are we justified?  
 -the law of faith  
 -by faith **without** the law

4. We conclude (again) - at verse 28 (conclusions begin here)
  - A. We are saved without the law
  - B. He is the God of the Gentiles as well as the Jews (29)
    - How is that so? - seeing that it is one God who justifies the Gentile and the Jew through faith (30)
    - He justifies the circumcised and the uncircumcised through faith
5. An **objection** is raised (31)
  - Segue way verse* into chapter 4
  - Do we then make void the law through faith?
    - God forbid... we establish the law
    - Jesus said He did not come to abolish the law but that it might be fulfilled

Abraham and Isaac on Mt Sinai  
 God will make a way!