

The Righteousness of God

Romans 3:20~28, part 4 of 4

I can't begin to express, the utter depths of revelation contained in the section of scripture we just read... If the bible is the "written revelation of God," and it is, then, Romans 3:20~28 brings us as close to Him as we can possibly get. I'm convinced, if you listen closely, you'll hear the "heartbeat" of God Himself.

Contained in these verses are truths "so simple," that a child can understand...yet at the same time, truths that we spend our entire Christian lives trying to "grasp..."

It contains truths that many of this worlds finest scholars, most notable theologians, could never find... While at the same time, someone who has never read the bible, find it's truths upon the first hearing...

Verse 21 is a "transitional" point in Paul's letter... It marks the "beginning point", of the "unveiling" of the *great mysteries* of God... Starting here, Paul begins to reveal the answers that man has sought after for thousands of years! Since the beginning of time, in every generation, man has sought to "Know God," to understand Him, to "commune with God..."

²¹**But now** the righteousness of God without the law **is manifested**...
...being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

The God of Scripture...that ALL HOLY SCRIPTURE speaks to...



The "Righteousness" of God, "**His Character**" is now "**Visible** ...
The "**Glory**" of God is "**has taken on a physical form**..."it can "**be seen**..."

A "**Form**" that carnal MAN **can SEE!**

The "Very essence" of what man has been looking for...**can now be found!**

Q: WHERE?

Paul says...**In the Cross...**

(Vs 24~25) ²⁴Being justified freely by his grace...**through the redemption** that is in Christ Jesus:

²⁵Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

Paul declares, that in the Cross, the Righteousness, the Glory of God **is made known**...(is manifested...)

To "**Understand the Cross**" is to "**Understand God!**"

There's not a more "clearer" and "understandable" statement in the "mind of the Jew" than this one...

He speaks of the "**Sacrificial Offerings**" that lie at the heart of the Jewish faith!

Paul declares that every Bull that was sacrificed, every lamb, every goat, every dove... Every animal that was slaughtered and placed on the altar, pointed to the "Cross" as the altar, and on that altar was sacrificed the "**lamb of God**..." for all the sins of mankind!

²⁵Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith **in his blood**, to declare his righteousness **for the remission of sins** that are past, through the forbearance of God;

Redeemed by the *Blood* of the Lamb...



Paul points to the Cross, and declares, he has found it...he has found it...he has found it!
The very "Source"... THE DOOR...that enables men to "enter into" a relationship with GOD!

Listen... Every man/woman for generations have sought for God through various means... Many question the Bible, in how can one be sure that it is "RIGHT"! They wonder about the Koran, the Islamic Faith, Buddhism, etc... The Christian faith "*claims*" to be the "*Only True Faith*" that leads to God, and that ALL OTHER faiths are cults...the worship of a false God!

The question people often ask is this...How do you know, who is "right?"
How do you know who it is that holds the truth?

Listen very closely... It is the one, which leads to life...

The one that "Brings man" into a "Personal relationship" with God...

EVERYTHING ELSE is simply "RELIGION!"

I want you to listen very closely to me... If I had not found "LIFE" in these scriptures...I'm telling you, that I would not be here this morning! I would not WASTE my time on Church, and this book if I had not found LIFE! But I'm telling you...that what I found in the Cross...is LIFE!

²¹*But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested...*

In the cross, we come to see that He is a God of Love, a God of Mercy, a God of Compassion, a God of Longsuffering... While at the same time, we see He is a God of Anger, a God of Judgment, A God of Terror, A God of Justice...

It's almost as if, two opposite pictures of God collide...

God of **Love**...and at the very same time...a God of **Hate**...

God of **Forgiveness**...and at the very same time...a God of **Condemnation**...

God of **Mercy**...and at the very same time...a God of **Judgment**...

What is "*manifested*" at the cross is "*incomprehensible*" to the human mind...

How is it possible to exercise "*Perfect Love*" and "*Utter Hatred*" at the same time...

How is it possible to exercise "*Perfect Forgiveness*" and "*to condemn*" at the same time...

How is it possible to exercise "*Perfect Mercy*" and "*Perfect Justice*" at the same time?

I mean, I understand that God is a merciful God...

The best definition of "**Mercy**" is this... **Not receiving what we do deserve...**

God is so merciful towards us... And the scriptures testify, that He delights in mercy. And there is none like God, when it comes to mercy...He is so merciful!

But at the same time, He is a "**God of Justice**..."

"*Justice*" is best defined... "*Getting Exactly*" what we deserve...

Which is the "*exact opposite*" of Mercy... Mercy is tender hearted, stirred by compassion, and overlooks and forgives the offender... While Justice is cold hearted, void of compassion, totally indifferent to the offender, and renders "*an eye for an eye*..."

Knowing that, that God cannot sin... How can He exercise "*Mercy*" & "*Justice*" at the same time?

How could God “*Forgive*” sins of a man, while at the same time, not “*be Guilty*” of overlooking Iniquity?

I don’t know about you... But I wouldn’t serve a God who was not a God of Justice! That would be no different than Judge in our legal system who lets criminals go!

What do you think about a Judge who continues to “*show mercy*” on drug dealers, murders, thieves, child molesters...by letting them off?

Illustration: The Judge who let that man who raped that little girl... (60 days!)

What do you think about a Judge like that?

In the “EXACT SAME WAY”... How could God “*Pardon*” a man who is guilty, while at the same time, not “*be Guilty*” of overlooking Iniquity?

How is that possible?

The answer... **The Cross**...

(Vs 26) ²⁶To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Paul says that in the Cross, God was JUST! In that he poured out his justice and wrath on sin... “*Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin...*” Something the Jew was very much aware of... Blood sacrifices was a normal part of life and worship of God... Each time they would offer a sacrifice, the individual who was giving the offering, would lay his hands on the head of the animal, symbolizing the transfer of his sins to that animal! Then the animal would be slaughtered before the man, and it’s blood poured around the altar, and the body of the animal placed on the altar and burnt...

What a picture of the cross... We see just that in the death of Christ! Christ took upon himself “*our sins*” and became the *sacrificial lamb* offered up on the altar!

So we see in the cross...God’s Justice! Sin is punished, sin receives the full weight of justice!

While at the same time, we see in the cross...God’s Mercy! In that the offender is pardoned...freed! Having his sins transferred to the sacrifice, he is acquitted of all guilt!

(Vs 26) ²⁶To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Beloved, it is in the Cross...

He is JUST in dealing with sin...and the JUSTIFER of the sinner...

The Cross-is where God forgave His Children, without lowering His standards

(Vs 27~28) ²⁷*Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.* ²⁸*Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.*

Why the Cross?

(1Co. 1:29)...That no flesh should glory in His presence...

(1Co. 1:31)...According as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

So that “All praise, honor and glory would find it’s rightful place in God...”