



A STUDY OF  
THE BOOK OF  
**ROMANS**

upgrade



# CHAPTER 3

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# The Righteousness of God: Justification by Faith Alone

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# Introduction to the Bible Study on Romans 3

**Theme: The Righteousness of God Revealed Through Faith**

Romans 3 is one of the most foundational chapters in the Bible regarding salvation, sin, and justification.

In this passage, the Apostle Paul systematically demonstrates the universal guilt of humanity, the insufficiency of the Law to make one righteous, and the glorious revelation of God's righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ.



The book of Romans is often considered Paul's masterpiece, and in chapter 3, he transitions from the condemnation of both Jews and Gentiles (Romans 1–2) to the revelation of God's solution—justification by faith alone.

This chapter confronts some of the most critical theological questions:

- Are the Jews at an advantage because of their heritage?
- Is anyone righteous on their own?
- Can the Law save us?
- How does God provide righteousness to sinners?



Paul's conclusion is clear:

*"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23, NKJV)—but the good news is that salvation is offered freely through Christ's atoning sacrifice.*



## ROMANS 3:1–8 (NKJV)

<sup>1</sup> What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision?

<sup>2</sup> Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God.

<sup>3</sup> For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect?

<sup>4</sup> Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: “That You may be justified in Your words, And may overcome when You are judged.”



<sup>5</sup> But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unjust who inflicts wrath? (I speak as a man.)

<sup>6</sup> **Certainly not!** For then how will God judge the world?

<sup>7</sup> For if the truth of God has increased through my lie to His glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner?

<sup>8</sup> And why not say, “Let us do evil that good may come”?—as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say. Their condemnation is just.





# 1. The Universal Guilt of Mankind (3:1–8)

## Key Verse: Romans 3:4

“Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar.”

Paul anticipates Jewish objections regarding their special status as God’s chosen people. He emphasizes that while the Jews were entrusted with the “oracles of God” (λόγια τοῦ Θεοῦ, *logia tou Theou*), they are still accountable to Him.

**Key Greek Verb: "Γένοιτο" (genoito) – "Certainly not!"** (v.4) This verb is in the optative mood, expressing a strong negative reaction—"May it never be!" Paul uses this phrase throughout Romans to reject false conclusions emphatically.



# 1. The Universal Guilt of Mankind (3:1–8)

## Application:

- God remains faithful even when people are unfaithful.
- Religious privilege (having the Word of God) does not exempt one from accountability.



## ROMANS 3:9–12 (NKJV)

<sup>9</sup> What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin.

<sup>10</sup> As it is written: “There is none righteous, no, not one;

<sup>11</sup> There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God.

<sup>12</sup> They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one.”



## 2. No One is Righteous (3:9–12)

### Key Verse: Romans 3:10

“As it is written: ‘There is none righteous, no, not one.’”

Paul levels the playing field, stating that both Jews and Gentiles are under sin. The word "**under**" (ὕπὸ, *hypo*) indicates being in the power or control of sin.

**Key Greek Verb:** "ἔστιν" (*estin*) – "Is" (v.10) This is in the present indicative, meaning that no one *continually* exists in a state of righteousness apart from Christ.



## 2. No One is Righteous (3:9–12)

### Application:

- All humanity is sinful and in need of God's righteousness.
- We must not rely on our own goodness but on God's grace.



## ROMANS 3:13–20 (NKJV)

<sup>13</sup> “Their throat is an open tomb; With their tongues they have practiced deceit”; “The poison of asps is under their lips”;

<sup>14</sup> “Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.”

<sup>15</sup> “Their feet are swift to shed blood;

<sup>16</sup> Destruction and misery are in their ways;

<sup>17</sup> And the way of peace they have not known.”



18 “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.



### 3. The Condemnation of the Law (3:13–20)

#### Key Verse: Romans 3:20

“Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight.”

Paul lists multiple Old Testament references to describe humanity’s depravity (e.g., their throats are “an open tomb”). He concludes that the Law does not justify but reveals sin.

**Key Greek Verb: "δικαιωθήσεται" (dikaiōthēsetai) – "Will be justified" (v.20)** This verb is in the future passive, indicating that no one will *ever* be declared righteous through the Law.





## 3. The Condemnation of the Law (3:13–20)

### Application:

- The Law serves to expose sin, not to remove it.
- We must seek justification apart from our works.



## ROMANS 3:21–22 (NKJV)

<sup>21</sup> But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,  
<sup>22</sup> even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;



## 4. The Righteousness of God Revealed (3:21–22)

### Key Verse: Romans 3:21

“But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed.”

Paul introduces a dramatic shift: righteousness comes *apart from the Law* and is made available through faith in Jesus Christ.

**Key Greek Verb: "Πεφανέρωται" (pephanerōtai) – "Has been revealed"** (v.21) This verb is in the perfect passive tense, meaning God's righteousness has already been fully manifested and continues to be evident.



# 4. The Righteousness of God Revealed

## (3:21–22)

### Application:

- Righteousness is not earned but revealed and received.
- Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law's righteousness.



## ROMANS 3:23–24 (NKJV)

<sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

<sup>24</sup> being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,



## 5. Justification by Faith Alone (3:23–24)

### Key Verse: Romans 3:23

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

Paul summarizes the human condition: all have sinned. Yet, through Christ, we can be justified freely by His grace.

**Key Greek Verbs:** "Ἠμάρτον" (hēmarton) – "Have sinned" (v.23) This is in the aorist tense, indicating a completed act—humanity as a whole has fallen.

"ὑστεροῦνται" (hysterountai) – "Fall short" (v.23) This is in the present tense, showing that humanity *continually* lacks God's glory.



## 5. Justification by Faith Alone (3:23–24)

### Application:

- Justification is a gift of grace, not a reward for obedience.
- We need Christ's atoning sacrifice to be reconciled with God.



## ROMANS 3:25–26 (NKJV)

<sup>25</sup> 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,

<sup>26</sup> to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.





## 6. Redemption Through Christ's Blood (3:25–26)

**Key Verse: Romans 3:25**

“Whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith.”

Jesus' death was a *propitiation* (ἱλαστήριον, *hilastērion*), meaning a sacrifice that satisfies God's wrath.

**Key Greek Verb: "Προέθετο" (proetheto) – "Set forth" (v.25)**

This verb means that God publicly displayed Jesus as the atoning sacrifice.



## 6. Redemption Through Christ's Blood (3:25–26)

### Application:

- Christ's blood satisfies God's justice.
- Faith is the means by which we receive redemption.



## ROMANS 3:27–31 (NKJV)

<sup>27</sup> Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith.

<sup>28</sup> Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.

<sup>29</sup> Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also,

<sup>30</sup> since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.

<sup>31</sup> Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.



## 7. Faith and Boasting in God Alone (3:27–31)

### Key Verse: Romans 3:28

“Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.”

Paul dismantles any claim to self-righteousness. Justification is by faith, nullifying any grounds for boasting.

**Key Greek Verb:** "Λογίζομεθα" (logizometha) – "We conclude" (v.28) This verb means to reckon or calculate. Paul is making a logical deduction based on the preceding argument.



## 7. Faith and Boasting in God Alone (3:27–31)

### Application:

- Salvation is entirely by God's grace.
- Faith, not works, justifies a person before God.



# CONCLUSION:

## The Righteousness of God in Christ

Romans 3 systematically dismantles any notion of self-righteousness, demonstrating that all have sinned, the Law cannot save, and justification comes only through faith in Christ.



# KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. No one is righteous on their own (Romans 3:9-12).
2. The Law exposes sin but does not justify it (Romans 3:20).
3. God's righteousness is revealed through faith in Christ (Romans 3:21-22).
4. All have sinned and continually fall short (Romans 3:23).
5. Christ's blood redeems us (Romans 3:25).
6. Justification is by faith alone (Romans 3:28).
7. Boasting is excluded—salvation is God's work (Romans 3:27-31).



# Romans 3:1–31

## The Righteousness of God: Justification by Faith Alone