

## Romans in Eight Verses part four: Romans 3:25

*God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood – to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished. (NIV)*

Please take about twenty minutes to have a go at the questions below before watching this week's 25 min video. There are a couple of suggested ways to respond at the end. We'd love to hear how you get on! Sam (sam.bostock@gmail.com)

### Get ready

Words matter! What words would make a real difference in your life at the moment? Words from the Prime Minister? Words from a police officer or a judge? Words from a friend or loved one?

According to Paul, we have 'no excuse' (1:20, 2:1) when it comes to questioning God's condemnation of humanity. Take a moment to look over ch 1:18-3:18 to remind yourself why that is.

As sinful human beings, what words do we deserve to hear God say to us? What words do we *want* to hear from God?

### Read

*Read Romans 3:19-26*

In English the words righteous, just and justified look quite different. But they all come from the same root word in Greek. We can see what's going on with this very literal version of Romans 3:20-26:

Therefore no one will be **righteoused** before God from works of the law. For through the law we become conscious of sin. But now, apart from the law, the **righteousness** of God has been shown to which the law and the prophets testify – the **righteousness** of God through faith in Christ Jesus for all who believe. For there is no distinction, for all have sinned and lack the glory of God, being **righteoused** freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation through faith in his blood, in order to prove his **righteousness**, because of the passing over of former sins, in the forbearance of God – to prove his **righteousness** in the present time, in order that he might be **righteous** and the **righteouser** of the one who has faith in Jesus.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Teaching Romans* by Christopher Ash

This passage contains some unusual words. Look up the following words in a dictionary:

- Righteousness (clearly an important word!)
- Redemption
- Atonement (NIV) or Propitiation (ESV)

Re-read the passage with your definitions in mind. Does anything make more sense? What doesn't make sense?

**Harder bonus question:**

Here are two different possible meanings for the word 'righteous'<sup>2</sup>:

- God's character/attribute of being just.
- The righteousness that God gives believers through Jesus Christ.

Use two different coloured pens to mark which meaning of 'righteous' fits best with each use of the word. For some it should be clear enough, for others it could be tricky, so don't worry if you get stuck!

**Watch**

Video on Romans 3.25: <https://youtu.be/PAAJScfWKVU>

**Respond**

This week's Catechism question asks "What is justification?"

- A. *Justification is the act of God's free grace by which He pardons all our sins and accepts us as righteous in His sight. He does so only because He counts the righteousness of Christ as ours, which is received by faith alone.*<sup>3</sup>

What elements of this definition can you see from our passage in Romans? What could you add to it from our passage?

Immediately following our passage Paul says, "where then is boasting? It is excluded. Because of what law? The law that requires works? No, because of the law of faith" (3.27). Instead, "we boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation" (5.11).

Has looking at this week's passage humbled you or lifted you up?

Take some time to 'boast in God' for his righteousness revealed in the gospel.

---

<sup>2</sup> You may remember from our first study that Luther's big gospel discovery was that in Romans 1:17 Paul was not talking about the first meaning of righteousness but the second: in the gospel God's righteousness comes to believers through faith!

<sup>3</sup> *Shorter Catechism*, A.33