



“Jesus Died for God”¹ **Romans 3:21-26**

As I was writing this sermon this past week, one of my sons saw the title and said, “I thought Jesus died for sinners? That’s what we were taught in Sunday School.” To that, I said, “Well, that’s true, but why did Jesus die for sinners? Did he have to die for sinners?” Then, another child said, “No.” So, I said, then what motivated Jesus to die for us? And, he said, “God.” That’s what I mean by “Jesus died for God,” and this passage is going to bring this out even more.

Last week’s sermon ended with Romans 3:20, which says, ^{“20}For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.”² Paul has shown us, beginning in chapter 1, that if we really apply God’s Law as it is intended, every command reveals to us that we’re sinners. We’re not good enough.

But we try to make ourselves believe we are good enough. When we hear the word “righteous,” we might think of it in terms of a resume of feats that we’ve accomplished. We emphasize ourselves and highlight our kindnesses to others. We advertise these things in the hopes that we’re good enough and we’ll be accepted. We do this not only on resumes but in everyday life. Think of Social Media. For some people, that’s the opportunity for you to maximize what you hope to be and to minimize the bad traits. So, you create a profile that makes you look good. Nice smiling pictures and wonderful quotes fill home page. With all of this polishing of your resume and social media accounts, you may hope you’re good enough. And this is how we might think with God. If we can just polish our resumes and make ourselves look as good as our Facebook account, then maybe we’re good enough for God? Maybe we’re righteous? But Paul has shown us here in Romans the problem with that logic. At the core, when we do this we are emphasizing ourselves and diminishing God. In other words, we are exchanging God’s glory and trying to highlight our glory. Every polishing of the resume is self-elevating and self-justifying. Every time you say “But God, I do this good action and that nice thing,” is a confession that you believe you don’t need God. Being confronted in this way can make us recoil or become angry. Many of us say to God, **“How can God judge me when I’ve been so good?”** But even this question reveals that you elevate you and are quick to judge the One who created you.

In every situation of life, we can see how we humans, left to ourselves, will always highlight us. And that’s the problem. We were created for us. We were created for God. And, in order to see God rightly, we must first embrace what Paul has been saying from the beginning: We sin against God and his glory. Therefore, the right question we should be asking is, **“How can God forgive me when I’ve been so sinful?”** This is the question that is answered in the text we’re studying today in Romans 3:21-26. If you haven’t turned there, please go there right now. I’ll pray before I read:

¹ This manuscript is still in the rough draft phase. I recommend you utilize these notes in conjunction to the sermon to gain greater insight and clarity.

² [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Ro 3:20.

²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶ It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. ³

We have to remember these verses in the context of Paul's argument. Way back in chapter 1, Paul said that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes. The word "gospel" means "good news." In the Roman context, it referred to a ruler's victory over enemies. In Paul's context, it refers to Jesus being victorious over sin and death. Jesus' death on the cross on behalf of sinners actually reconciled people to God and gives them eternal life! Jesus is the victorious King. But how does he do this? How can he reconcile rebels to God? Well, that's answered in these verses.

Up to this point, Paul starts off with the bad news. We're sinners to the core – whether Jew or Gentile, religious or irreligious, immoral or moral. Now, in verse 21 of chapter 3, Paul explains the good news. The absolutely phenomenal news. In verse 20, we read no one can be justified by the works of the Law. And then in verse 21, it starts off with "But now." What glorious words! Imagine a person in desperate circumstances pleading for mercy from a horrible fate. They say they'll do anything. Then the person they're pleading to says there's nothing they can do. Then there's a pause, and they say, "But. . . ." That word brings a ray of hope. And here, in these chapters, Paul has been saying in various ways how there's nothing we can do. No matter how hard we might try to polish our resume for God, there's *nothing* that makes us acceptable. Once we're in this desperate situation, Paul then brings in the words: "But now." These two words bring more than a ray of hope. This is the piercing light of God's glory coming in with absolute joy! But now! There's hope!

But you could say, "What does the 'now' mean?" When Paul uses these words elsewhere, he seems to be speaking of a contrast with the past. And so, it seems likely here. In chapters 2 and 3, he speaks of the old covenant under Moses, and how that did not save. It highlighted our sin. But it didn't only highlight our sin. Verse 21 says that the Law and Prophets witnessed to the greater covenant of today. In other words, if people read the Old Testament correctly, they would have seen that the Scriptures saying that we needed God's rescue through his Messiah. They prophesied of a greater day. The day Paul is speaking of.

But now, under the new covenant, there's something greater, something superior. God doesn't accept us because of a polished resume. Instead, righteousness comes to us as a gift. And this righteousness only comes to us because there was One who glorified God perfectly. You see, we failed at glorifying God. That's the essence of sin. The only way that we can be brought to God is through One magnifying God's name supremely and perfectly. What we see in chapters 1-3 is that when we self-justify, we are

³ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Ro 3:21–26.

self-condemned. But when God is glorified supremely, we are justified! So, this is what I mean when I say, “Jesus died for God.” He died so that God’s glory would be seen as supreme!

Yet, even in saying this, Paul has led us to ask the right question – and this is the question over these verses – **“How can a just God justify sinners justly?”** Or, **“How can a righteous God declare sinners righteous and remain righteous himself?”** I use the words “just” and “righteous” because they’re related terms. I have to define justified right from the beginning. It’s the first time Paul uses it in the book of Romans, and it’s a very important word for Paul, not only in Romans but in all his letters. **The word justified, for Paul, means “to be declared righteous.”** It’s a judicial term where God is the Judge and he hands down the judgment over someone. He can either declare someone condemned or he can declare them righteous. Paul says in verse 21 that the righteousness of God is manifested apart from the Law – meaning, apart from adherence and obedience to the Law. If we are looking to our obedience to save us, we will never. The Judge will judge us condemned. But if we look to *one place* outside of the Law, we can be declared righteous by the Judge. How can this be? And, how can a righteous God give righteousness apart from our obedience and also remain righteous himself? That’s where Paul’s going here. So, let’s break down this question into two questions:

1. How does a sinner receive righteousness?

This is a hugely important question. A question that both the Gentile and Jew would ask. They could look at Paul’s message and then look at the follower’s of Paul’s message and say, “But look at those people! They’re sinners, too!” And Paul doesn’t deny it. Instead, in these verses, Paul actually highlights that those who follow Jesus still sin. But isn’t the point of Paul’s argument that we’re not made right with God on the basis of our performance?

So, look at verses 22-24 again with me: ²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. . .⁴

The righteousness of God comes for all who believe. Every single person who believes on Jesus is made righteous. Then Paul says “For there is no distinction: for all have sinned. . .” The word “all” in verse 23, who is it referring to? Many times, people say it’s referring to the world. Well, let’s put “in the world” after the word “all.” For “all in the world have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace. . .” Is that what Paul’s saying? All in the world are declared righteous and made right with God?” Some have actually interpreted the verse this way. But there’s a flaw in that logic. The word “all” in verse 23 is related to “all who believe” in verse 22. So, “all who believe have sinned and are justified.” That actually fits!

When Paul is saying there’s no distinction, he’s saying among the people who believe in Christ, there’s no superiority. All came by way of the foot of the cross. All confessed their sinfulness and confessed their need for Jesus, and they were made right before God. In and of itself, that’s a phenomenal statement. God can declare sinners righteous? God declares a sinner righteous – apart from the Law?

⁴ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Ro 3:21–24.

But Paul goes further here. He makes an even bolder claim. Not only do those who believe in Jesus confess they *have sinned* (past tense), but he goes on and says that they “fall short of the glory of God.” This phrase, in the Greek, is in the present tense. Meaning, all who believe have sinned and continually fall short of the glory of God. If you judge me, Ventura, on the basis of the Law, I continually fall short of God’s glory. I do not give God the glory he deserves every moment of every day. I do not highlight and praise him as he is worthy. In reading my Bible, I often have to battle against a heart that would rather scroll Facebook than ponder God’s eternal decrees. I have to pray for my own coldness and listlessness. In addition, in a given day, I can get angry, I can boast in myself, I judge people who don’t follow traffic signals. My sin can range from obviously sinful to disguised sinfulness under the banner or spiritual morality.

When I read Paul’s words “continue to fall short of the glory of God,” I resonate. Paul is raising up Christians as exhibit A. I am in this list, and if you believe on Jesus, you’re in this list, too! Yet, for you and I, we can also boldly proclaim that we are justified! Our resume before God is full of demerits – even after believing on Christ.

Someone who truly trusts in Jesus will anger the world – not because they’re “holier than thou,” but because they confess their sinfulness and also declare they’re 100% right with God. This angers the religious moralist because the religious moralist has tried so hard to maintain. It’s like the older brother in the story of the Prodigal. He tells his dad he slaved away at obeying! How dare the dad give treasures to the disobedient younger son. But the Christian also can anger the irreligious. They may believe their works don’t matter and they’re fine the way they are. But the Christian believes that only God can make them right. You see how Paul using a Christian confronts both? The religious and irreligious will look at a Christian and both think, “How then can *you* be declared righteous? What makes you so confident?” This is what Paul answers. We’ll first look technically at this. How does a sinner become righteous?

Last year was the 500th celebration of the Protestant Reformation. And, last summer, I preached a sermon series on Sunday evenings on the “Solos” of the Reformation. These were the core beliefs that shaped the changing tides of Christianity in the 16th century. The word “sola” means “alone.” And the people who were confronting the Catholic Church were teaching that we are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone in accordance with the Scriptures alone for God’s glory alone. The word “alone” is extremely important because the Catholic church would say grace through faith. But they wouldn’t say “grace alone” through “faith alone.” Yet, it’s a passage like this one that leads us to see that our salvation, from beginning to end is all of God’s grace for God’s glory. When we ask “How can a sinner become righteous” we will see here some of these solas. So, let me start by highlighting:

Faith alone. (vv. 22, 25-26) If righteousness, a right standing before God the Judge, cannot be given through moral attainment under the Law, then how can one receive righteousness? The answer is made obvious by Paul in this passage. In verses 22, 25 and 26, Paul focuses in on faith.

Look at verse 22 first: the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.⁵ Both the word “faith” and the word “believe” are related terms. Some find it unnecessary for Paul to spoken redundantly here, but if you’d spent any time in Paul’s writings, you realize that Paul is redundant, but for a purpose. The righteousness of God doesn’t come from the Law. It comes through faith. People who try to get God’s righteousness through the Law are like people who try to build a relationship with a picture. The picture does reveal the person, but the picture offers no relationship. Similarly, with the

⁵ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Ro 3:22.

Law. The Law does not reconcile. Therefore, we need a right standing with God some other way. It's through faith in Jesus Christ *for* all who believe. When Paul says through and for, I believe he's emphasizing that all who have faith will receive a right standing with God. They will be made righteous.

Then verses 25 and 26 say, "to be received by faith" and "the one who has faith in Jesus." It's at this point that I have to explain *what* faith is. In our society faith means so many different things. One dictionary definition is that it's belief in something without any proof. Or, think of how some people say, "I believe in you!" And, what they mean is, "I'm motivating you with these words in order to do the difficult thing." Belief then becomes a means to strengthen someone else's resolve to do something. Is that what faith in Jesus is? Do we say, "I believe in you, Jesus! You can do it!" Still others use faith as an object of our hope. So, we don't care what you have faith in as long as you have faith. People talk of someone having a strong faith, as though that's a virtue in and of itself. But my question is, "What was their faith in?" Biblical faith is none of these. Instead, the biblical teaching of faith is that it is dependence, trust in, reliance on someone. And, in the context of these verses, faith is worthless if it is not focused on an object. Faith is the only thing that cannot be considered a work because faith is coming to God with empty hands, depending on him to fill them. Therefore, when we say *faith alone*, we have to go into the second sola:

Christ alone. (vv. 22, 24-26). Verse 22 says "faith in Jesus." Verses 24-26 say, "redemption that is in Christ Jesus," "whom God put forward [meaning, Jesus]," and "the one who has faith in Jesus." The emphasis is on Jesus. When we say that we're saved through faith, what we mean is that we're saved by Jesus. I hope that you understand this. Your faith doesn't save you. Jesus saves you.

Therefore, as I've said before, **it's not the amount of faith that saves you, it is the object of your faith who saves you!** I loved an illustration I read in one of my commentaries this past week. I could have an unshakeable faith in my ability to fly from the US to the UK if I just put on bird feathers, but because my faith is in the wrong place, I will never fly – no matter how much faith I have. But, I could have great fear boarding a transatlantic airline. Yet, because I'm on the plane, I will make it to the UK – no matter how much trembling. This is the idea that is brought up with Jesus, when the father says to Jesus, "Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief" (Mk. 9:24). If faith saves, then Jesus would have said to the man, "Too bad. You don't have enough." But if Jesus saves, then it's not about how much faith. It's about Jesus.

Right here, Paul cuts to the core of our sinful tendencies. Even in salvation, we want to elevate ourselves and say, "Well, it's *my faith* that saves me." But Paul is using all types of words to emphasize that your salvation doesn't come by you emphasizing your glory. You have none. Salvation comes when God is glorified! Look to Jesus!

To press the point further, Paul then shows us that sinners are saved through faith alone in Christ alone by God's:

Grace alone (v. 24). Read verse 24 with me again: ²⁴and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. . .⁶

When I was a pastor of student ministries, I remember taking some teens on a trip to Illinois to help a church with some outreach efforts. On that trip, I was having a conversation with a couple of teens about our sinfulness and Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. One junior high student chimed in and said, "But I

⁶ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Ro 3:24.

must have something good about me because Jesus loved me enough to die for me!” And, at that point I exclaimed, “What?!” Another high school student responded the same way and said, “Jesus didn’t die for you because you had something good in you!”

But this is again what we try to do in our humanness. When we hear “faith alone,” we think, “Yes! Look at my faith,” and Paul says “NO! Look to Jesus. That’s faith.” When we hear “Christ alone,” we think, “Yeah, but isn’t there anything I can do?” Then when it comes to “Grace alone,” we think, “Well, it was gracious, but it was because I had something in me that Jesus loved.” We are incessant in our desire to elevate ourselves, aren’t we? God didn’t reconcile you to himself because of something in you or me. Some might say, “But we’re created in God’s image! That’s why Jesus died for us.” But, that could be even more reason why God would condemn the whole human race. We, of all creation, were the most blessed and therefore our sin becomes the most wretched and deserving of death. It is an utter mystery of grace and glory that God would rescue human beings.

Now, in case you want to really believe there was something in you that made God save you, look at how Paul stacks up his words to ensure we get the point: by his grace as a gift. The word “grace” is understood generally as undeserved favor. We get eternal kindness from God apart from anything we have done or anything we are. In fact, in spite of all we have done, God shows eternal favor. That’s grace. So, it seems redundant of Paul to say “as a gift.” Grace in and of itself is a gift. But Paul wants to highlight something very specific here. This word translated “as a gift” is translated in John 15:25 as “without cause.” Jesus said, “They hated me without cause.” So, the phrase “as a gift” can also be translated as “without cause.” If you mark in your Bibles, that might be a nice note to put in there. I think this is the intention Paul is driving home. Christians were declared righteous by God without any cause in them whatsoever!

It’s not our works. It’s not our personality. It’s not even our faith. God saved us without cause in ourselves. This grates even professing Christians sometimes because they’ll say, “Well, my faith was the cause of my salvation!” No, it wasn’t! Faith is the means through which God saves, but faith is not the cause. Can you imagine if you were hanging on the side of a cliff, screaming for help. Then a rescue crew comes, lifts you out of the cliff, and when you were asked how you were rescued off the cliff, you say, “It was yelling that rescued me!” If I hadn’t yelled, I wouldn’t have been saved. How much more with God – who knows what we need of before we ask?! As I said earlier, faith is coming to God with empty hands. Faith is recognizing that not even faith can save me – only Jesus can.

By the way, this ought to be a very freeing thought to all of us who believe on Jesus. To quote from Timothy Keller, “. . .if you come to think that your belief is the cause of your salvation, you will stop looking at Christ and start looking at your faith. When you see doubts, it will rattle you. When you don’t feel quite as clearly or excitedly, it will worry you. What has happened? You’ve turned faith into a ‘work’! Faith is only the instrument by which you receive your salvation, not the cause of your salvation. If you don’t see this, you will think you have something to boast about: *The reason I am saved is because I put my faith in Jesus. This is a subtle misunderstanding which cuts away our assurance, and boosts our pride*” (Keller, p. 81).

So, how can a sinner be declared righteous? Through God emphasizing himself. He’s the Savior – not us. By God’s grace alone through faith alone in Jesus alone, one can be declared righteous. This is the only way for salvation because this shows the utter inability of humans and the complete power of God himself. But we can still ask another question:

2. How can a sinner be justly justified?

Verse 24 says that we are justified by grace as a gift *through* the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. This is simply a statement of fact. Justification is the answer to the “what” question. What happened to us? We were declared righteous. But, the next part of the phrase is the answer to the “how” question. How is it even possible that God would justify us?! Is He being unjust to do so?

All that we read can sound wonderful to us as Christians, but when the world looks at all of us who still sin, they can say “No fair! How can God be just in declaring those sinners to be righteous?” This is the point that people cry out for justice! And, it’s true that God must be just in all he does. He never simply winks an eye at sin and ignores it. But even for those of us who are Christians, we can still wonder how God can actually declare us righteous because, after all, we do continue to fall short of glorifying God as he deserves.

I want you to imagine yourself in a courtroom. Imagine that you’ve been charged with a crime, and the consequences are steep. The declaration of that judge is going to determine the course of the rest of your life. There’s fear. There’s turmoil. You know you’re guilty. You know what you deserve. This is the imagery Paul wants us to have in mind when thinking about God. Imagine yourself in God’s heavenly courtroom. The splendor of Heaven, the powerful angelic presence and the sheer brightness of the place is enough to send you trembling, falling on your face before God. Then God’s presence is there. The fullness of his power and glory and perfection come before you, and like Isaiah, you confess, “Woe is me!” But something radical happens. He declares your sins forgiven. In the courtroom, you are not only declared not guilty. You are declared righteous!

Now Christian, you understand this illustration, right? But let me take this a little further. Some Christians stay in the courtroom, doubting God’s decree. They’re waiting for God to say, “Whoops, nevermind! I made a mistake. You’re verdict is condemned!” Maybe that’s you this morning. You refuse to leave the courtroom. Instead of walking out with joy and hope, you doubt God’s decree. You keep focusing on you and not on the One who justified you. But listen here, God didn’t simply declare a truth over you. At great cost with complete justice, he gave you salvation.

So, Paul shows in this text to both unbelievers and believers how God can justly justify those of us who have sinned and continually fall short of his glory. And there are two primary words to focus on. The first is:

Redemption. When you think about our justification, our being declared righteous in God’s sight, I want you to imagine a courtroom scene. The answer to the “how” question is important for all of us because it will get us to stand up out of the chairs and really believe that the court is adjourned. The answer is found in the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Now, what is redemption? Redemption is actually a term referring to buying slaves out of the slave market. So, here in this text, Paul is saying that God declared us righteous by buying us out of slavery to sin. How’d he do that? Because Jesus lived the perfect life we could never live and Jesus took the punishment our sins deserved! Therefore, sin has no more dominion over those of us who are connected to Jesus through faith. Any condemnation the Law might like to speak is squelched by Jesus and our connection to him!

By the way, this is a statement of fact that Paul is bringing about. In other words, you may still feel the struggle with sin, but again, if you are a believer in Christ, then you preach to yourself, “This is not who I am. Jesus died and set me free!” So, I am justified because Jesus bought me out of slavery. His righteousness is now mine. The other word Paul highlights is:

Propitiation. So Paul brings up justification. He then turns to the big word of redemption. Now, he goes to another word: propitiation. Some translations say “expiation” and I don’t think that’s a helpful word for Bible study. Expiation simply means that Jesus has made things right, but it doesn’t speak the fullness of the word “propitiation.” However, the word propitiation is widely unknown in our culture and therefore a confusing word, too. But I love the word! Propitiation refers to appeasing God’s wrath. This word goes all the way back to the tabernacle experience where people would take the blood of the sacrificed animal and sprinkle it on the mercy seat behind the veil within the Holy of Holies.

Paul is essentially saying that Jesus is the new covenant fulfillment of the Old Covenant mercy seat. Jesus is the place of atonement. And, instead of Jesus existing behind some veil, Paul says that God set forth Jesus in front of people to be seen by the world! One commentator wrote the following: **“What in the OT was hidden from public view behind the veil has now been ‘publicly displayed’ as the OT ritual is fulfilled and brought to an end in Christ’s ‘once-for-all’ sacrifice.” – Douglas Moo**

Listen carefully, Christ satisfied God’s just wrath for all who believe in Christ! Every sin of ours was laid on him. Jesus actually took the real punishment we deserved. The eternity’s worth of Hell that we could never satisfy was laid on him. And when Jesus cried out “It is Finished,” he justly satisfied the Law’s demands and set us free to be reconciled with God.

Now, Christian, what else do you need to have confidence before the throne of God? You may say, “Well, I don’t have enough faith.” Or, “I’ve sinned today.” Or maybe you think, “But, I’m just so weak.” You know what all of this speaks to you? Look to Jesus and get out of the courtroom! Your salvation doesn’t come from within you! It all comes from Christ. Your assurance lies in him. And if you have never looked to Christ, I pray you would do so today! Your salvation is found only in Him! Will you trust him? Jesus’ sacrifice and resurrection reveal that God is righteous. Under the Law, we could never obey God. But Jesus is the Only One who glorified God. And, he being the God-Man did glorify God in all he did, even in his death.

Now, Paul concludes this paragraph with the end of verse 25 through verse 26 by saying, “This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.²⁶ It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”⁷

These verses show us that we ought to be most concerned for God’s glory. Because we humans suppress the truth about God (which is the essence of sin), what we need is for God to shine forth his glory (which is the essence of Life)! And that’s what God has done in the cross. The sacrifice of Jesus shows God’s glory in two ways. First, through explaining how God could have forgiven “former sins.” Former sins refers to the former time period. Under the Mosaic Covenant, people were forgiven by God. How could David say his sins were forgiven? Because someday, a Messiah was going to come. If the Messiah wasn’t coming, God would be unjust to have forgiven the sins of anyone in the Old Testament.

⁷ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Ro 3:25–26.

But now, in the present time and era of God's salvation, God's righteousness is revealed, too. Jesus is clearly on display and we see that God is both just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

This last verse is the reason I titled the sermon that Jesus died for God. Jesus died for God's glory to be on display – and when we see God's glory supremely emphasized, humans can be rescued – declared righteous! To quote again from Timothy Keller, **“The wonder of the cross is that in the very same stroke it satisfies both the love of God and the justice of God. At the very same moment it shows us that God is *both* the Judge, who cares enough about his world to set standards and holds us accountable to them; *and* the Justifier, who has done everything necessary to forgive and restore us”** (Keller, p. 85).

There is nothing in our hands whereby we can claim right to salvation. Instead, the mystery and glory of salvation is that our Triune God delighted in a plan to rescue wretches and declare them righteous. The only plan that could save us was a plan that had to reveal the fullness of God's glory. Jesus accomplished this plan, and now for all of us who have faith, we have received a complete, perfect salvation.

Yes, we still fall short of God's glory, but Jesus glorified God. And now, we can walk out of the courtroom justified because through Jesus, God has given us a righteousness directly from himself – Christ's righteousness. This ought to humble and amaze us. Our God loves us purely because he loves us! And because he loves us, we are secure. No more boasting in ourselves and our works (we'll get to this next week, and the weeks to come). For now, Christian, be amazed and enthralled in the grace of God towards you.

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