

### Romans 3. 21-31. Nassau. 19 April 2015.

As most of you know, the Bible passage for this morning is that of Romans chapter 3, verses 21 to 31. But, for the sake of context and connection, we begin our reading a little earlier – for this morning’s short opening reading, at verse 19.

Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become answerable to God. Because by works of the law no flesh shall be justified before Him, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

The chapter which we are looking at last week and this divides itself neatly into three parts: (i) first, in verses 1-8, Paul stated and answered four objections to his earlier teaching; (2) then, in verses 9-20, the fact that, not only Gentiles, but Jews also, are under the power of sin is established beyond question from the Jews’ own scriptures; (3) and finally, in verses 21-31 – which is our passage for this morning – we discover that God’s answer to the universal problem of sin (whether that of Jew or Gentile) is found in our Lord Jesus.

Those of you who were here last Lord’s Day – and who have reasonably decent memories – may recall that towards the close we saw how Paul, having established that the Jews come under the condemnation of God’s word no less than the Gentiles, drew his conclusion, ‘that every mouth (of Jew as well as Gentile)’ is ‘stopped, and that all the world’ becomes ‘answerable (is held accountable) to God’, exposed to His righteous judgement.

We noted how the apostle graphically painted the verbal picture of the defendant in court, who, though given every opportunity to speak in his own defence, is speechless on account of the weight of the evidence which has been brought against him. With nothing to say in his defence, he can only wait for the verdict to be announced and for the sentence to be executed. Nor can he look to the ‘works of the law’ (of the Law of God, that is, given to Moses) to prevail on God, ‘the righteous Judge’, to rule in his, the sinner’s, favour, and to pronounce (to declare) righteous one who clearly isn’t.

At this point, the sinner’s case is seen to be altogether hopeless, with the law<sup>1</sup> offering him, as we saw, no ray of light, no flicker of hope, no prospect of rescue.

And we dropped the curtain with a quotation from the Roman poet Quintus Horatius Flaccus, known, as we said, to his friends, and to the English speaking world, as Horace. In one of his poems, you may remember, when setting out guidelines for writers of tragedies, he laid down the rule, ‘A god must not be introduced, unless there is a knot worthy of a god’s unravelling’.

I repeat what I said then, that I have read that ‘Luther once said that the forgiveness of sin is a knot that needs God’s help to unravel’, and I then promised that, God willing, this morning we would consider how, in the following verses, the problem has been solved – the knot has been unravelled!

And so we continue our reading at verse 21:

But now, apart from the law, a righteousness of God has been manifested, witnessed to by the law and the prophets; a righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.

For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus: whom God set forth as a propitiation (*or, possibly, ‘as a mercy-seat’*) in His blood, to be received through faith, to demonstrate His (God’s) righteousness, by reason of<sup>2</sup> the passing by (*‘passing by unpunished’, that is<sup>3</sup>*) of the sins that had taken place beforehand, through the forbearance of God; to demonstrate His righteousness at the present time, that He Himself should be just, and the *justifier* of the one who has faith in Jesus.<sup>4</sup>

Where then is boasting? It has been excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith.

For we reckon that a man is justified by faith, apart from works of the law.

Or is He the God of Jews only? Is He not of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since<sup>5</sup> it is one God who will justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith.

Do we then nullify the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.

I guess that the closing verses we looked at last week report ‘The Best Bad News You’ll Ever Hear’. For in that section the apostle established beyond any doubt that all (Jew as well as Gentile) are, without exception, sinful, inexcusable, and speechless before God ... that all are guilty and exposed to God’s wrath.<sup>6</sup> But the opening two words of our passage mark the great turning point in Paul’s argument. ‘**But now**’, Paul breaks in ... God himself has intervened on the sinner’s behalf.

Righteousness is, of course, one of God's attributes, and it is of this that Paul will speak shortly in verses 25-26.

But, given that here the expression '**righteousness of God**' is qualified by the phrases 'apart from the law' and 'through faith in Jesus Christ', in this case I take it to mean the same as it did in chapter 1;<sup>7</sup> namely, the righteousness which is reckoned by God to all those who believe the message of the gospel. This then is a right standing before God which is provided by God Himself ... as Paul expresses it elsewhere, a righteousness which comes 'from God'.<sup>8</sup>

If I am right, the expression 'righteousness of God' here could then well be paraphrased as 'God's way of justifying the ungodly' ... as 'God's way of putting sinful people right with Himself'.<sup>9</sup>

Some two years before Martin Luther is believed by many to have sparked the Protestant Reformation by attaching his ninety-five theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg,<sup>10</sup> he began to teach the book of Romans to his students. Looking back on that period thirty years later, he wrote:

'I greatly longed to understand Paul's epistle to the Romans ... Night and day I pondered until I saw the connection between the righteousness of God and the statement that "the just shall live by his faith". Then I grasped that the righteousness of God is that righteousness whereby, through ... mercy, He justifies us by faith ... Thereupon I felt that I had been born again ... I exalted this sweetest word "the righteousness of God" with as much love as before I had hated it This phrase of Paul was for me the very gate of paradise'.<sup>11</sup>

And from that moment on, to Martin Luther the 'righteousness of God' meant the righteousness which God reckons to those who, in themselves, are *unrighteous*,<sup>12</sup> but who have put their faith in Christ.

And this way in which God justifies sinners **has been manifested**, has been disclosed and now lies open to view.<sup>13</sup>

Speaking of what can be known of God, the apostle had said in chapter 1 that this is manifest (this is made plain) to the Gentile world through creation around (through the things that are made).<sup>14</sup> That general manifestation of God in nature, Paul said then, is sufficient to secure man's *condemnation*,<sup>15</sup> but the special revelation and manifestation of God's way of justifying sinners, Paul says in our passage, is sufficient to secure man's *salvation*.

The expression **apart from the law** emphasises<sup>16</sup> that this salvation comes entirely independent of the law of Moses. And well it might, for, on account of our inability to keep it, that law has no more strength to save us than we have ourselves. Only the gospel has the power to do that.

But, although God's way of men being right with Him isn't *attained through* the law, it is *attested by* the law – it is verified by the law – **witnessed to both by the law and by the prophets**.

You may remember that the very first thing Paul said in this letter about the gospel was that it had been 'promised beforehand' through the Old Testament prophets 'in the holy scriptures'.<sup>17</sup>

That is, God's way of saving and justifying men was no afterthought on God's part to compensate for the fact that the law had failed to deliver the goods. This was no new-fangled invention. Far from it. As the apostle makes clear in the following chapter, he knew well that one of the law books had spoken of God's way of justifying a man by faith.<sup>18</sup> And, as we saw last week, he knew equally well that the same way was clearly taught in the prophets.<sup>19</sup>

And we find that God's way of salvation as 'witnessed to by the law and the prophets' was Paul's constant theme when preaching to his countrymen.<sup>21</sup>

And this way of righteousness with God comes, Paul says, **through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe**.

And I note that between verse 22 and verse 31 – the word 'faith' occurs no less than eight times,<sup>22</sup> with the word 'believe' appearing once here of course.<sup>23</sup>

The *value* of faith is, of course, not to be found in *itself*, but entirely and exclusively in *its object*, here 'in Jesus Christ'. Faith is, if you like, simply the eye that looks to Him, the hand that receives from Him, the mouth that drinks in the living water He gives.

One American theologian used the illustration of a train coupling. The function of the coupling is to join the rolling stock to a locomotive. The coupling has no power in itself. It cannot move a single freight car so much as one inch. All the power is in the locomotive. But the coupling is the link by which the power of the locomotive is transmitted to the freight wagons. in a similar fashion, faith has no power in itself.<sup>24</sup> It is simply that which links – which connects – us to Christ for salvation.<sup>25</sup>

**For there is no difference** – no distinction – **for all have sinned**<sup>26</sup>

I like to connect these words with what Paul says later in chapter 10: 'For there is no difference ... for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved'.<sup>27</sup> Here it is the 'no difference' of our guilt and *condemnation*. There it is the 'no difference' of God's grace and our *salvation*.

**All have sinned and** (continue to<sup>28</sup>) **fall short of**<sup>29</sup> – all are deficient in – all are destitute of – **the glory of God** ... which 'glory' I take to refer here to the true and proper end for which God originally created man. And, Paul says, we have all failed to live up to the ideal which God had in view when He formed our first parents.<sup>30</sup>

It has often been pointed out that, in the following verses, Paul presses into service the language of the law-court ('justified'), the slave-market ('redemption'),<sup>3</sup> and the temple ('propitiation' or 'mercy-seat') 'to do some justice to the fullness of God's gracious act in Christ'.<sup>31</sup>

First then, **being justified**.<sup>32</sup>

Personally, I take the close of verse 22 and all of verse 23 to be a parenthesis, and I therefore connect Paul's words 'being justified' in verse 24 back to 'all who believe' of verse 22. In other words, it is only those who believe ( and *not* all of fallen mankind) who are justified freely by God's grace.

I know that some folk stumble over the word 'justification' as being rather technical. Some time ago, I came across an account by one Bible scholar of a true incident which happened to him.<sup>33</sup> I quote, 'I was once speaking to a group of business people on justification, and there was a journalist representing a local newspaper in attendance. I preached justification ... clearly, earnestly, and, I hoped, persuasively. It was, therefore, rather discouraging to learn from the newspaper account that I had spoken the night before on the theme of "Just a vacation by faith!" Fly now, pay later! ... that's what the journalist heard ... '.

Well, at its simplest, to 'justify' somebody is to declare that he or she is in the right. In a law court, justification is the judge's verdict in favour of one party or the other.<sup>34</sup>

Strictly speaking, 'acquittal' doesn't quite capture the meaning. For 'justification' is something far more positive. It doesn't denote merely the absence of guilt ... it conveys a positive status – that of standing in the right – on the basis of a declaration to that effect by the presiding judge.<sup>35</sup>

The Old Testament was very clear and explicit on the subject of justifying people, and that in all sections – in the law books,<sup>36</sup> the poetical books,<sup>37</sup> and the prophetic books.<sup>38</sup> All sections of the Old Testament spoke with one voice: judges in Israel were to justify only those who were personally righteous, and to condemn those who were personally wicked. What is more, the Lord declared plainly of Himself at Sinai, 'I will not justify the wicked'<sup>39</sup> – something followed up by Solomon in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple.<sup>40</sup>

You can imagine therefore the shock it must have proved to the Jews of Paul's day to be told by the gospel preacher that God does precisely that which they had been brought up to believe He would never do.

But how could the righteous Lord declare the *unrighteous* to be righteous without either compromising *His own* righteousness or condoning *their unrighteousness*? That was the burning question. And, as the apostle makes clear in this and the following two verses, God's answer is the cross. For, whereas the law made provision for the justification only of the righteous, the gospel makes provision for the justification of the unrighteous. But, as Paul later shows, the only basis on which God 'justifies the ungodly'<sup>41</sup> is that 'Christ died for the ungodly'.<sup>42</sup>

Speaking for myself, I enjoy the comment passed by one Greek scholar and translator on a 'pidgin' version of the New Testament in New Guinea. 'We salute', he wrote, 'strokes of genius such as the translation of 'Justification': "God 'e say 'im alrite"<sup>43</sup>. And what a thought that is – that Almighty God looks at me, and, because of the work of the Lord Jesus on the cross, "God 'e say 'im alrite".

Let us be clear then that justification is a legal term, and that, if somebody is justified in gospel language, this means that he or she has been pronounced – has been declared – by God to be 'righteous' in His sight – to be 'in the right' before Him.<sup>44</sup>

Here then is the definitive answer to the question posed almost 2000 years before Paul wrote by both Job himself and by his so-called friend Bildad, 'How can man be just with God?' How can man be in the right with God?<sup>45</sup>

And the sinner is justified, Paul adds, **freely** – gratis,<sup>46</sup> 'as a gift',<sup>47</sup> for nothing – 'without a cause', as the word is translated elsewhere.<sup>48</sup> Yes, justified 'without a cause', but certainly not, as Paul makes very clear, 'without a cost'.<sup>49</sup>

And it's all **by His grace**. The initiative is entirely God's. Our justification can be traced back to its spring and source in His free and undeserved favour.<sup>50</sup> And it flows, Paul says, **through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus**.

As we noted a little earlier, just as 'justification' is a *legal* term borrowed from *the law-court*, so 'redemption' is a *commercial* term borrowed from *the marketplace*.

The particular word Paul uses here is often found in non-biblical Greek with the sense of securing the freedom of a slave or captive on payment of a ransom'.<sup>51</sup>

But in this case, the vast ransom price God paid serves to magnify the wonder of God's free grace.

I hardly need to comment further, because I spoke at some length on the subject of 'Redemption' here two years ago.<sup>52</sup> And those with memories like elephants may recall that I then drew attention to the ransom demanded – and paid – for the release of Hong Kong tycoon Walter Kwok<sup>53</sup> in 1997. Kidnapped on the 30<sup>th</sup> of September, he was set free seven days later after a ransom sum of almost \$77 million<sup>54</sup>) was paid by his wife.<sup>55</sup> One website I consulted at the time claimed that this was 'the highest ransom ever paid in the world'.<sup>56</sup>

But that website was way out! First, I have since discovered that an earlier ransom price paid to the *same* kidnapper (a notorious Chinese gangster known as 'Big Spender') for the release of Victor Li<sup>57</sup> was *even* higher – in that case, well over \$129 million, paid in cash by Victor's father, Li Ka-shing.<sup>58</sup> But, second – and far more important – if you want to know the highest ransom price ever paid, you will need to ask, not Walter Kwok or Victor Li. You will need to ask the man with the nail-pierced hands!<sup>59</sup>

**whom God set forth<sup>60</sup> as a propitiation (or, possibly, 'as a mercy-seat')<sup>61</sup>**

I have to confess that I am uncertain in which of these two ways we should translate the word that Paul uses here. I can see good arguments in favour of both renderings.

If we opt for 'a propitiation', the apostle is pointing to the Lord Jesus as the sacrificial offering who, in His death, endured the wrath of God for us – satisfying and turning away from us that which is God's inevitable reaction to sin, and thereby 'saving us' from that to which we were all justly exposed.<sup>62</sup>

But if we opt for 'a mercy-seat', Paul is making direct reference to the lid of pure gold which covered the ark of the covenant in the tabernacle of early Old Testament days, and which was sprinkled with the blood of the sin-offerings on the great Day of Atonement.<sup>63</sup>

Certainly it is of this that the exact word is used, not only in by far the majority of its occurrences in the Greek Old Testament,<sup>64</sup> but in the only other place in the New Testament where it is found.<sup>65</sup>

If we do understand the word as carrying this meaning ('mercy-seat') here, then, as we scan the entire New Testament, we find that our Lord Jesus is portrayed, in type and in foreshadowing, not only as the High Priest who makes propitiation for the sins of the people<sup>66</sup> ... not only as the sacrifice which itself propitiates and satisfies God's wrath against sin<sup>67</sup> ... but also as the place where propitiation is made.<sup>68</sup>

At the very least, the word Paul chooses to use here (and here only) *alludes to* the mercy-seat and to what took place there once a year.

And God has '**set forth**' – has publicly displayed – 'Christ Jesus' as a propitiation (or 'mercy-seat') – in all probability, a reference either to the public exhibiting of Jesus on the cross itself, or to the open proclamation of His death in the preaching of the church.<sup>69</sup>

And so, if, in the language of the law-court, 'justification' has dealt with our condemnation; if, in the language of the market-place, 'redemption' has dealt with our bondage; in the language of the sanctuary, 'propitiation' or 'mercy-seat' has dealt with our exposure to God's wrath.<sup>70</sup>

And it was **in His blood** – in the sacrificial death of our Lord Jesus, that is<sup>71</sup> – that God's wrath was propitiated. And, as we have seen, faith is the means by which the saving benefits of His death can be appropriated.<sup>72</sup>

**to demonstrate** (to display) **His** (God's own) **righteousness**. And God's righteous character *needed* to be vindicated, because He had been in the business of forgiving sins – and of letting them go unpunished<sup>73</sup> – for thousands of years.

Did this mean that He treated the grievous sins of (say) King David lightly?<sup>74</sup> Certainly not, Paul would say. The full demands of God's law and righteous standard would have to be met. But, praise God, His *wisdom* devised a way for His *love* to deliver us from His *wrath* without compromising in any way His *justice* – His righteousness.

And throughout Old Testament days, in perfect righteousness, God passed by the sins of His people in anticipation of those sins being dealt with – of them being paid for in full – at the Cross. This He did **through His forbearance** – His self-restraint – which we must be careful not to confuse with any indifference to sin on His part.

In a very real sense, therefore, believers before our Lord's death were saved 'on credit'. Today, most of us are familiar with the idea. If we purchase some item or items with a credit card, we can immediately enjoy the benefits of our purchase even though we have not yet actually paid up. But, sooner or later, the day of reckoning will come, and we will have to settle the account.

And it was precisely this that Jesus did at Golgotha for Abraham, for David, and for an innumerable company of God's people who died before He did.

And there at the cross was the proof that, by God's own action, sin was *condemned* and not *condoned*.<sup>75</sup> Through the previous ages, God had simply *postponed* the day of His visitation in judgement on sins 'that had taken place beforehand'.

And it is true to say therefore that, just as the resurrection of Christ vindicated *His own* righteousness,<sup>76</sup> so His death vindicated *God's* righteousness.

But this not only in respect of believers through the ages then past, but equally to **demonstrate His righteousness at the present time, that He Himself should be just, and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.**<sup>77</sup>

But what a thought! That, because my Saviour has suffered (Himself the Righteous for me the unrighteous<sup>78</sup>) and thereby settled my account with God in full, my salvation rests four-square, not so much on the grace and mercy of God, as on His personal righteousness.<sup>79</sup>

Well do some of us sing Augustus Toplady's great hymn:

From whence this fear and unbelief,  
Since God my Father put to grief  
His spotless Son for me?  
Can He, the righteous judge of men,  
Condemn me for that debt of sin,  
Which, Lord, was charged on Thee?

If Thou hast my discharge procured,  
And freely in my place endured  
The whole of wrath divine,  
Payment God will not twice demand,  
First at my bleeding Surety's hand,  
And then again at mine.<sup>80</sup>

In the remaining five verses of our chapter,<sup>81</sup> the apostle returns to the question-and-answer format he had adopted at the beginning.<sup>82</sup>

When Paul poses the question, **Where then is boasting?**, he may well have particularly in mind the Jew's well-known boasting both in his knowledge of God,<sup>83</sup> and in his possession of the law of God.<sup>84</sup>

But, in any case, as one well-known paraphrase renders his words, 'What then can we boast about? Nothing!'<sup>85</sup>

For all boasting – all self-glorying and self-congratulation – **has been excluded** – and that once for all, as the tense is.<sup>86</sup> All boasting has been eliminated – it has been booted out of the house, and the door well and truly slammed shut behind it!

On what basis, pray? Not of course, Paul asserts, on the principle of works, but on the principle of faith.<sup>87</sup>

For, by justifying and saving sinners on that basis alone, God has well and truly cut the ground from beneath the feet of all man's glorying and pride.<sup>88</sup>

We may well contrast Paul's words here,<sup>89,90</sup> with the words with which he had earlier concluded his quotation-chain of human guilt.<sup>91</sup> What a staggering contrast between his words *then*, '*By works of the law no flesh shall be justified*', and his words *now*, '*a man is justified by faith, apart from works of the law*'.<sup>92</sup> Paul was emphatic that

God's prescription to cure a person's condemned condition never read, 'Keep taking the tablets'! As somebody once expressed it rather quaintly, '*Faith* is the only foot which the glass slipper of *justification* will fit'.

One much-used gospel preacher of the last century, Mr Harold Barker, told of a Christian lady who, during the early 1800s, died and was buried in the London Borough of Enfield in England. Mr Barker drew attention to the six lines carved on her tombstone:

If friendship, kindness, truth, goodwill and love  
Could prove a passport to the realms above,  
The soul that tenanted this mouldering frame  
To God's right hand might justly lay a claim.  
*But her own works she scorned as worthless dust:  
Her Saviour's merits were her only trust.*<sup>93</sup>

I can imagine the apostle Paul sounding a hearty 'Amen' to that!<sup>94</sup>

And I want to close this morning's meeting by referring you to the testimonies of two men, both of whom were great in their own ways.

My first man is William Cowper, known best perhaps for his poetry and hymn writing.<sup>95</sup> Mr Cowper passed through many periods of acute depression and more than one of actual insanity.

Apparently, it was 'through the third chapter of Romans that heavenly light first came to' his 'terribly troubled soul' in 1764.<sup>96</sup> I will let Mr Cowper tell his own story:<sup>97</sup>

'The happy period which was to afford me a clear opening of the free mercy of God in Christ Jesus, was now arrived ... seeing a Bible there ... the first verse I saw was the 25th of the third of Romans ... Immediately I received strength to believe it ... I saw the sufficiency of the atonement He had made, my pardon sealed in His blood, and all the fulness and completeness of His justification ... I could only look up to heaven in silent fear, *overwhelmed with love and wonder*'.

My second man<sup>98</sup> died almost a full century later than Mr Cowper, and hardly needs any introduction.

In one of his books, George Müller wrote:

During my ... labours for many years I found that numbers of true children of God are without the knowledge of their standing in Christ. They do not enter into the fact, that they have passed from death unto life, that they are regenerated, pardoned, *justified*, accepted in the Beloved, and *are no longer under condemnation*. Now, having entered into all this experimentally for more than half a century myself, I desire (with the help of God) to bring others also to an apprehension (*in the sense of understanding and grasp*) of these blessings.<sup>99</sup>

May our study this morning add to *our* 'apprehension' – to *our* grasp – of some of 'these blessings' too.

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## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 3. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Translation of J. B. Lightfoot.

<sup>3</sup> 'The signification of the verb παρίεμαι appears clearly from the two following passages: Sir\_23:2 : "Lest sins should remain unpunished (μη̄ παριῶνται τὰ ἄμαρτήματα);" and Xenophon, Hipparchic. 7.10: "Such sins must not be allowed to pass unpunished (τὰ οὐν τοιαῦτα ἄμαρτήματα οὐ χρὴ παρίεμαι ἀκόλαστα)." It is worthy of remark also that in these two places sin is designated by the same word ἄμαρτημα as Paul employs in our passage'. (Godet.) 'The temporary withholding of judgment'. (Lightfoot.)

<sup>4</sup> 'This short section [Rom. 3. 21-26] is ... the centre and heart of the main division to which it belongs. We may go farther and say that it is the centre and heart of the whole of Rom 1.16b-15.13. It stands out by reason of the distinctiveness of its style: it reads like a solemn proclamation ... It stands out much more of course by virtue of its content; for it proclaims the fact that the one decisive, once for all, redemptive act of God, the revelation both of the righteousness which is from God and also the wrath of God against human sin, the once for all revelation which is the basis of the continuing revelation of the righteousness (1.17) and of the wrath (1.18) of God in the preaching of the gospel, has now taken place. It shows that the heart of the gospel preached by Paul is a series of events in the past (not just the crucifixion of Christ – for the Cross by itself would have been no saving act of God – but the crucifixion together with the resurrection and exaltation of the Crucified) a series which is the Event of history, an act which as the decisive act of God is altogether effective and irreversible. It attests the fact that what we have to do with in the gift of righteousness, with which Romans is concerned, is nothing less than God's costly forgiveness, which, whereas forgiveness on cheaper terms would have meant God's abandonment of His faithful love for man and the annihilation of man's real dignity as His morally accountable creature, is altogether worthy of the righteous, loving, faithful God, who does not insult or mock His creature man by pretending that his sin does not matter, but rather Himself bears the full cost of forgiving it righteously – lovingly', C E B Cranfield, ICC Commentary.

<sup>5</sup> 'Seeing that', the translation of J. B. Lightfoot.

<sup>6</sup> The section Rom. 3. 24-26 stands a little over half-way between the revelation that God was turned against the human race in wrath (Rom. 1. 18) and, simultaneously, was turned towards it in love (Rom. 5. 8).

<sup>7</sup> Rom. 1. 17.

<sup>8</sup> '... be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from ('out of') God that depends on faith', Phil. 3. 9. Cf. Rom. 10. 3; 'seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to the righteousness of God'.

<sup>9</sup> Good News Bible.

<sup>10</sup> According to scholars Walter Krämer, Götz Trenkler, Gerhard Ritter and Gerhard Prause, the story of the posting on the door, even though it has settled as one of the pillars of history, has little foundation in truth. The story is based on comments made by Philipp Melanchthon, though it is thought that he was not in Wittenberg at the time. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin\\_Luther#Justification\\_by\\_faith\\_alone](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Luther#Justification_by_faith_alone)

<sup>11</sup> Preface to the Complete Edition of Luther's Latin Writings of 1545, including a partial paraphrase by Roland H. Bainton in his biography of Luther, 'Here I Stand, A Life of Martin Luther', page 65.

Roland Bainton's volume can be downloaded from ... <https://archive.org/details/hereistandalife0005163mbp>.

The standard translation of the Preface to the Complete Edition of Luther's Latin Writings of 1545 is as follows:

'I had conceived a burning desire to understand what Paul meant in his Letter to the Romans, but thus far there had stood in my way, not the cold blood around my heart, but that one word which is in chapter one: "The justice of God is revealed in it." I hated that word, "justice of God," which, by the use and custom of all my teachers, I had been taught to understand philosophically as referring to formal or active justice, as they call it, i.e., that justice by which God is just and by which he punishes sinners and the unjust.

'But I, blameless monk that I was, felt that before God I was a sinner with an extremely troubled conscience. I couldn't be sure that God was appeased by my satisfaction. I did not love, no, rather I hated the just God who punishes sinners. In silence, if I did not blaspheme, then certainly I grumbled vehemently and got angry at God. I said, "Isn't it enough that we miserable sinners, lost for all eternity because of original sin, are oppressed by every kind of calamity through the Ten Commandments? Why does God heap sorrow upon sorrow through the Gospel and through the Gospel threaten us with his justice and his wrath?" This was how I was raging with wild and disturbed conscience. I constantly badgered St. Paul about that spot in Romans 1 and anxiously wanted to know what he meant.

'I meditated night and day on those words until at last, by the mercy of God, I paid attention to their context: "The justice of God is revealed in it, as it is written: "The just person lives by faith'." I began to understand that in this verse the justice of God is that by which the just person lives by a gift of God, that is by faith. I began to understand that this verse means that the justice of God is revealed through the Gospel, but it is a passive justice, i.e. that by which the merciful God justifies us by faith, as it is written: "The just person lives by faith." All at once I felt that I had been born again and entered into paradise itself through open gates. Immediately I saw the whole of Scripture in a different light. I ran through the Scriptures from memory and found that other terms had analogous meanings, e.g., the work of God, that is, what God works in us; the power of God, by which he makes us powerful; the wisdom of God, by which he makes us wise; the strength of God, the salvation of God, the glory of God.

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'I exalted this sweetest word of mine, "the justice of God," with as much love as before I had hated it with hate. This phrase of Paul was for me the very gate of paradise. Afterward I read Augustine's "On the Spirit and the Letter," in which I found what I had not dared hope for. I discovered that he too interpreted "the justice of God" in a similar way, namely, as that with which God clothes us when he justifies us'.

Preface to the Complete Edition of Luther's Latin Writings of 1545. Downloaded from ...

<http://www.bluffton.edu/~humanities/2/ml-1545.htm>

It is to Edgar Mayer's article, 'The Cross and Experiencing God' that I owe the proper source of the quotation:

<http://www.lcansw.org.au/gathering/resources/Session%2020-%20Edgar%20Mayer%20-The%20Cross%20and%20Experiencing%20God.pdf>

'It is necessary to understand that Martin Luther, like all of us, was a product of his times. His initial understanding of "the righteousness of God" was based on the interpretations of the scholastic theologians of the high and late Middle Ages (1100-1500 A.D.), who taught that the righteousness of God was God's active, personal righteousness or justice by which he punishes the unrighteous sinner'. From ...

<http://www.internetmonk.com/archive/34849>.

<sup>12</sup> Rom. 3. 9.

<sup>13</sup> Perfect tense. Cf. Rom. 1. 17, 'revealed', in contrast to wrath revealed, v. 18.

<sup>14</sup> Rom. 1. 19.

<sup>15</sup> Rom. 1. 20.

<sup>16</sup> It is emphatic by position.

<sup>17</sup> Rom. 1. 2.

<sup>18</sup> Rom. 4. 3 with Gen. 15. 6. Cf. 'the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed"', Gal. 3. 8.

<sup>19</sup> Rom. 1. 17 with Hab. 1. 17.

<sup>20</sup> It is probably to such passages as these, rather than to any direct types or predictions of the Messiah, that the apostle refers.

<sup>21</sup> 'We bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus (raising Him up to be the promised Messiah)', Acts 13. 32-33. 'From morning till evening he expounded to them, testifying to the kingdom of God and persuading them concerning Jesus both from the law of Moses and from the prophets', Acts 28. 23.

<sup>22</sup> Rom. 3. 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30 (twice), 31.

<sup>23</sup> Rom. 3. 22.

<sup>24</sup> 'A. H. Strong uses the analogy of the coupling. The coupling joins a train of cars to a locomotive. The coupling has no power in itself. It cannot move a single car an inch. All the power is in the locomotive. But the coupling is the link by which the power of the locomotive is transmitted to the cars. Faith has no power in itself; it is not a ground of salvation; it is not a good work', John Gerstner.

From ... [http://www.the-highway.com/theology6\\_Gerstner.html](http://www.the-highway.com/theology6_Gerstner.html)

<sup>25</sup> Eph. 2. 8-9.

<sup>26</sup> 'Many take vv. 22b-23 as a parenthesis and connect the participle back to "all who believe" in v. 22a ... This yields the

quite valid thought that all who believe are thus justified freely by his grace. This is probably the way it should be understood. Because of the intervening parenthesis the participle can be translated as a main verb, thus: "Those who believe are justified freely by his grace". (Jack Cottrell, The College Press NIV Commentary.) But see D B Wallace's argument (unconvincing in my view) at <https://bible.org/article/syntax-romans-322-24-part-1>, and <http://reformationanglicanism.blogspot.co.uk/2009/10/dikaiousnh-theo-and-nt-wright-by-dr.html>.

<sup>27</sup> Rom. 10. 12.

<sup>28</sup> The tense change is significant, from the aorist (past) tense to the present tense – 'and are falling short'..

<sup>29</sup> "Fall short" is a good translation – the verb means "to lack, to be deficient in, to come short of, to be wanting". See to be in want, Luke 15. 14; to suffer need, Phil. 4. 12; to be destitute, Heb. 11. 37.

<sup>30</sup> Conformity to His image. See 1 Cor. 11. 7.

<sup>31</sup> "Paul ... pressed into service the language of the law-court ('justified'), the slave-market ('redemption'), and the temple ('mercy-seat') to do some justice to the fullness of God's gracious act in Christ". F. F. Bruce, Romans, page 107.

<sup>32</sup> The verb has appeared already three times in Romans (2. 13; 3. 4, 20), but this is its first use for the act of God by which sinners are saved through Christ's blood.

<sup>33</sup> 'Let me relate a true, though almost unbelievable, incident. I was once speaking to a group of business people on justification, and there was a journalist representing a local newspaper in attendance. I preached justification emphatically, clearly, earnestly, and, I hoped, persuasively. It was, therefore, rather discouraging to learn from the newspaper account that I had spoken the night before on the theme of "Just a vacation by faith!" Fly now, pay later! That's what the journalist heard as the central truth of the Christian religion! Now, a journalist can never be totally devoid of intelligence, nor can I be absolutely meaningless in a presentation. A strange event such as this could happen only because the word justification is so strange to the ears of modern Christians'.

Dr. John H. Gerstner (Professor of Church History at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and Knox Theological Seminary), 'Primer on Justification', Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1983.

[http://www.truthaccordingtoscripture.com/documents/theology/gerstner-justification.php#UxNaT\\_I\\_uZU](http://www.truthaccordingtoscripture.com/documents/theology/gerstner-justification.php#UxNaT_I_uZU)



<sup>34</sup> We should remember that cases in Jewish law were simply between accuser and accused; there was no Director of Public Prosecutions.

<sup>35</sup> When a judge condemns someone, that does not make the latter unrighteous or guilty; it is simply a pronouncement that he is guilty. Likewise when a judge justifies someone, this does not make him righteous; it only declares his righteousness. This is also illustrated by the way the term is used in Luke 7. 29, which literally says that the people justified God. This cannot mean that they made him righteous; they were only acknowledging his righteousness.

<sup>36</sup> Deut. 25. 1.

<sup>37</sup> Prov. 17. 15.

<sup>38</sup> Isa. 5. 23.

<sup>39</sup> Exod. 23. 7.

<sup>40</sup> 1 Kings 8. 32.

<sup>41</sup> Rom. 4. 5.

<sup>42</sup> Rom. 5. 6.

<sup>43</sup> H. K. Moulton, *The Bible in the World*, Jan-Feb 1963, page 10. Quoted by F. F. Bruce, *Romans*, page 78, footnote 2. Dr H. K. Moulton was Visiting Professor of New Testament at the United Theological College, Bangalore.

<sup>44</sup> Scripture never speaks of 'imputed righteousness – as if a sum put to my account. But of imputing righteousness. It means that someone has been declared to be "in the right". It does not mean that they have been granted or imputed a "righteousness" which belongs to someone else. See ...

<http://www.stempublishing.com/authors/kelly/7subjects/righteou.html>

<sup>45</sup> Job 9. 2; 25. 4.

<sup>46</sup> 2 Thess. 3. 8.

<sup>47</sup> Contrast the Greek of Exod. 23. 7: judges in Israel were not to *justify* the *ungodly* to obtain a *gift*. Here God does *justify* the *ungodly*, Rom. 4. 5, and that as a *gift*, Rom. 3. 24 – the same Greek words throughout!

<sup>48</sup> John 15. 25 (Psa. 69. 4). If it isn't possible be to justified 'without a cause' by God's grace, Rom 3.24, then Christ died 'without a cause', Gal. 2. 21.

<sup>49</sup> 'By His blood', Rom. 5. 9.

<sup>50</sup> The Apurímac is the source of the world's largest river system, the Amazon River – and arguably the longest. The point of origin is a trickle of water coming off a cliff high in the Peruvian Andes (Nevado Mismi - 18,363 feet high). It is marked by a wooden cross.

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2000/12/1221amazon.html>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nevado\\_Mismi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nevado_Mismi)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apur%C3%ADmac\\_River](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apur%C3%ADmac_River)

<sup>51</sup> 'A price of release ... A releasing on payment of a ransom', W. E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* (ἡ πολύτρωσις). 'It is ... used in very late Greek ... of the ransoming of captives taken in battle', William Barclay, *New Testament Words*, *apolutrōsis*. 'The idea ... is twofold : (i) a price paid; (2) a deliverance thereby obtained, especially from a bondage or captivity', J. B. Lightfoot, *Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul*, page 271.

<sup>52</sup> 17 June 2012.

<sup>53</sup> Pronunciation at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2pPG8A9bmRk>.

<sup>54</sup> At March 2014 prices.

<sup>55</sup> See ... [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walter\\_Kwok](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walter_Kwok)

<sup>56</sup> See ... <http://www.cbc.ca/fifth/kidnapped/quiz/>

<sup>57</sup> Pronounced 'Victor LIE'. Full name 'Victor Li Tzar-kuoi'.

<sup>58</sup> Pronounced 'LIE KAH-SHINE-G' - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OcBsANUNIKU>.

The wife of Walter Kwok said she understood Li paid a ransom of \$129 million in cash, according to the South China Morning Post. 'Big Spender' was caught and executed in southern China in 1998. (Source: Reuters in Hong Kong: Monday, 15 October 2012.) See ... <http://www.scmp.com/node/1061660>.

See too ... <http://bambooinnovator.com/2013/11/30/li-ka-shing-broke-his-silence-of-17-years-to-say-he-never-had-second-thoughts-when-asked-to-pay-hk2-billion-by-the-kidnapper-of-his-eldest-son-victor-li-tzar-kuoi/>..

<sup>59</sup> And we know that the words, **the redemption which is in Christ Jesus**, certainly meant a lot to John Bunyan. In his autobiography, the tinker of Bedford records how, on one occasion, burdened by a great sense of his sinfulness, he (and I quote) 'was giving up all for lost; but', he then added, 'as I was walking up and down in the house, as a man in a most woeful state, that word of God took hold of my heart, You are "justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" ... Listening to this heavenly sentence, it was as if I had heard it thus expounded to me: 'Sinner, you think that because of your sins and infirmities I cannot save thy soul, but behold my Son is by me, and upon Him I look, and not on you, and will deal with you according as I am pleased with Him'. 'Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners', paragraphs 257-258. Downloadable from ... <http://www.library.unisa.edu.au/about/Exhibitions/PilgrimsProgress/8/Book.Grace.abounding.to.the.chief.of.sinner.s.pdf>

And 'this heavenly sentence', as John Bunyan labelled it, conveyed to him the assurance, that he was not only redeemed, but that he was also 'accepted in the Beloved', Eph. 1. 6.

<sup>60</sup> Jesus sets men free, v. 24; God sets Jesus forth, v. 25.

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<sup>61</sup> Since Christ's death not only corresponds to but supersedes the ritual of atonement in the OT, the public putting forth of Christ as hilastērion in contrast to the hiddenness of the mercy seat does not damage the typology but brings out its full force. Given the weakness of the counterarguments and alternatives, the dominance of the meaning "mercy seat" for hilastērion in the LXX, and the Jewish-Christian provenance of the pre-Pauline tradition in which this term is embedded in Romans 3:25, it is likely that hilastērion here means "mercy seat." *Dictionary of Paul and his letters*. 1993 (G. F. Hawthorne, R. P. Martin & D. G. Reid, Ed.) (283). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

<sup>62</sup> In pagan propitiation, the gods need to be propitiated because they are grumpy and capricious. They don't care much about humans except when something makes them angry; then they smite! And it's up to humans to get busy doing the propitiating, to make up for whatever they've done that angered the gods. The humans find something that the gods like (sweets, or meat, or pain, or blood), and offer it as a bribe to calm down their wrathful deities. But every aspect of biblical propitiation contrasts with the pagan kind. First, consider why God requires propitiation: not because he's moody or easily provoked, but because he is holy and just. God responds to sin with absolute consistency, and his "wrath is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness" (Rom 1:18). Second, consider who carries out biblical propitiation: not humans on their own initiative figuring out what God likes, but God himself declaring what kind of sacrifice he accepts, and then providing it. Even in the Old Testament, God takes credit for providing the blood of animal sacrifice ("I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement," Leviticus 17:11). And third, consider what kind of sacrifice brings about biblical propitiation: not a bribe or something nice to tide him over. No, in the fullness of time, God fulfills the Old Testament symbolism by giving his own Son to die for us.

<http://thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/trevinwax/2014/02/20/pagan-propitiation-vs-biblical-propitiation/>

<sup>63</sup> After the fall the cherubim stood between God and guilty man – wielding a flaming sword so man not approach. Now there are cherubim on the throne of God with no flaming sword to slay High Priest when enters... for they gaze upon the blood.

<sup>64</sup> Twenty-one of the twenty-seven occurrences.

<sup>65</sup> Heb. 9. 5.

<sup>66</sup> Heb. 2. 17.

<sup>67</sup> 1 John 2. 2; 4. 10.

<sup>68</sup> Rom. 3. 25.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Gal. 3. 1. Either way, it stands in marked contrast to the mercy-seat in the tabernacle. for there the veil (the 'second veil', Heb. 9. 3), which separated 'the Holy of holies' – 'the Holiest of all' (Heb. 9. 3, 80 – from the outer sanctuary, served to hide the ark of the covenant and the mercy-seat from the scrutiny even of the Jewish priests – with the sole exception of the High Priest himself once a year, Heb. 9. 7. And, indeed, even then, when he – the High Priest – was permitted, on the annual Day of Atonement, Lev. 23. 27-28, to enter the Holiest, the smoke of the incense 'before the Lord' created a screen which prevented him from gazing on the mercy-seat ('And he shall take a censer full of coals of fire ... and two handfuls of sweet incense beaten small, and he shall bring it inside the veil, and put the incense on the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is over the testimony, that he does not die', Lev. 16. 12-13), and, of course, on the Lord who appeared there ('And the Lord said to Moses, ... I will appear in the cloud over the mercy seat', Lev. 16. 2.). But Jesus, our mercy-seat, has been exhibited openly.

<sup>70</sup> The word 'wrath' occurs no less than eleven times in Romans (Rom. 2. 5 (twice), 8; 3. 5; 4. 15; 5. 9; 9. 22 (twice); 12. 19; 13. 4, 5) more than in all of Paul's other letters put together (ten times). Hoarded, Rom. 2. 5; rendered, Rom. 2. 8; revealed, Rom. 1. 18. Here averted.

<sup>71</sup> On the Jewish Day of Atonement the animal blood sprinkled literally upon the mercy-seat constituted the propitiation. "William Cowper was right, and truly scriptural both in doctrine and in language, when he taught us to sing:

'Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood  
Shall never lose its power,  
Till all the ransomed Church of God  
Is saved to sin no more'."

The 'blood' of Christ is mentioned in the writings of the New Testament nearly three times as often as 'the Cross' of Christ, and five times as frequently as the 'death' of Christ. Vincent Taylor, *The Atonement in N.T. Teaching* (1940), 2nd Edition (1945). p. 177, and footnote 2. "The distribution is as follows: Matthew (1); Mark (1); John (4), cf. xix. 34; Acts (1); Pauline Epistles (8); Hebrews (6); 1 Peter (2); 1 John (3); Apocalypse (4)".

<sup>72</sup> **to be received through faith**

<sup>73</sup> **the passing by ('passing by unpunished', that is ) of the sins that had taken place beforehand.** Refrain from punish. Joseph. Ant. XV. 3- 2 ... Herod anxious to punish a certain offence which however for other considerations he passed over. Acts 17. 30 ... The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. He had made no move to punish it.

<sup>74</sup> Rom. 4. 6-8.

<sup>75</sup> Rom. 8. 3.

<sup>76</sup> 1 Tim. 3. 16; Rom. 1. 3-4; Matt. 27. 63.

<sup>77</sup> Remembering the newspaper reporter's misunderstanding to which I referred earlier, on the basis of verses 25 and 26, I think we can safely say that God's righteousness never goes on vacation!

<sup>78</sup> 1 Pet. 3. 18.

<sup>79</sup> It has been well said that ‘Justice is now equally interested with Love in the rescue of the fallen’, J. R .Macduff.

<sup>80</sup> The 800 year-old 'law of double jeopardy' (that somebody could not be tried twice for the same crime) was scrapped in England and Wales in April 2005.

<sup>81</sup> And, as I understand it, the brief answers he gives to the questions posed here are greatly expanded in the following chapters, the first two in chapters 4 and 5, and the last in chapters 6-7.

<sup>82</sup> But questions now which arise, not as those earlier, out of the splendid demolition job the apostle had performed on Jewish false hopes in the second half of chapter 2, but out of his teaching about justification through faith, Rom. 3. 22, 25, 26.

<sup>83</sup> Rom. 2. 17.

<sup>84</sup> Rom. 2. 23.

<sup>85</sup> The Good News Bible.

<sup>86</sup> “Excluded” is aorist tense: “it has been excluded” once for all.

<sup>87</sup> The term law occurs over 70 times in this epistle, but not always in the same sense. Most often it means the law of God in one form or another. But there are places where it carries a different meaning. Here meaning of principle, system – cf. laws of nature. ‘Law of faith’ is a verbal paradox.

<sup>88</sup> Eph. 2. 8-9.

<sup>89</sup> **For we reckon that a man is justified by faith, apart from works of the law.**

<sup>90</sup> In the New Testament book immediately preceding this epistle, we read much of the apostle Paul’s activities in preaching the Christian gospel. But we find there, at the most, only short summaries of the messages which he gave – and more often than not, not even this.

But I have no doubt that *here* – in his letter to the Romans – he expounds for us many of the key features of that which (as we have heard in previous weeks) he calls ‘the gospel of God’, Rom. 1. 1; cf. Rom. 15. 16, ‘the gospel of Christ’, Rom. 1. 16; cf. Rom. 15. 19. See also ‘the gospel of His Son’, Rom. 1. 9, and ‘my gospel’, Rom. 2. 16; cf. Rom. 16. 25. See also ‘the gospel of peace’, Rom. 10. 15.

And it doesn’t take much effort to spot many points touched on in Luke’s account of the apostle’s preaching which are developed in this epistle. Take just a few obvious examples:

Paul in Acts	Paul in Romans
We bring you <b>the gospel</b> that what God <b>promised</b> to the fathers. (Acts 13. 32)	<b>The gospel</b> of God, which He <b>promised</b> beforehand ... in the holy Scriptures. (Rom. 1. 2)
Straightway in the synagogues he proclaimed Jesus, that He is <b>the Son of God</b> . (Acts 9. 20)	Declared to be <b>the Son of God</b> in power. (Rom. 1. 4)
(To <b>the Jews</b> ) ‘Since you ... judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are <b>turning to the Gentiles</b> . (Acts 13. 46)	To <b>the Jew first</b> and also to <b>the Greek</b> . (Rom. 1. 16)
We ought not to think that <b>the Godhead</b> is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, <b>graven</b> by art and device of man. (Acts 17. 29)	They ... changed the glory of <b>the incorruptible God</b> into the likeness of <b>an image</b> of corruptible man and of ... (Rom. 1. 23)
Everyone who <b>believes</b> is <b>justified</b> from all things, from which you could <b>not be justified by the law</b> of Moses.  (Acts 13. 39)	By <b>works of the law</b> no flesh shall be justified before Him ... a man is <b>justified by faith</b> apart from <b>works of the law</b> .  (Rom. 3. 20, 28)
The times of ignorance <b>God overlooked</b> , but now ... (Acts 17. 30)	In His forbearance <b>God had passed over</b> the sins that were previously committed. (Rom. 3. 25)

How *much* we owe to the diligent service of two relatively unknown believers in the early church ... to the pen of Tertius, Rom. 16. 22, and the handbag of Phoebe, Rom. 16. 1-2.

<sup>91</sup> Rom. 3. 20.

<sup>92</sup> Paul felt very strongly about all three elements: ‘justify’, ‘law’ and ‘faith’. these featured in his message in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch ... ‘Everyone who believes is justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses’, and in that which he said to Peter at Antioch in Syria, ‘we know that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified’,

Gal. 2. 16. And we cannot miss Paul's emphasis on the three key expressions – each mentioned three times in that single sentence: 'justified', 'works of the law' and faith in Jesus Christ – each of which he stresses here.<sup>92</sup> "We know that the works of the law cannot justify men in general (a man is not), they cannot justify us in particular (we might be justified not by works of law) nor, indeed, can they justify anybody (by works of law shall no flesh). So 'even we', Peter, believed in Christ. Do you remember, Peter, your own words at Jerusalem. Referring to the gentile household of Cornelius, I heard you say, 'we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they', Acts 15.11. Why then should those converted through my preaching be compelled to keep the law any more than those converted through yours?" I guess that you could say that, whereas Noah had once preached a righteousness which God demanded, Paul preached a righteousness which God supplied.

<sup>93</sup> 'Just over a hundred years ago, a woman was buried in an old churchyard in the London Borough of Enfield. (photo) Six lines on her tombstone show that she knew that, not character, but Christ saves:

If friendship ... her only trust'

H P Barker in '1200 Notes, Quotes and Anecdotes' by A. Naismith. number 614.

<sup>94</sup> But, as Paul was well aware, a zealous Jew would likely reply that this may well be good enough for Gentiles who didn't know the law, but surely not for the Jews who did know it? The way of justification for them (the Jews) must surely, it would be argued, still be by keeping the law of Moses.

In answer, Paul appeals ('it is one God') to the fundamental article of the Jewish faith – to that sentence from the law with which, as he knew from a lifetime of experience, every synagogue service more-or-less began (and still does) – 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, is one Lord', Deut. 6. 4; cf. Mark 12. 29-30. 'Shema Yisrael (or Sh'ma Yisrael; Hebrew: שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל; "Hear, [O] Israel") are the first two words of a section of the Torah, and is the title (sometimes shortened to simply Shema) of a prayer that serves as a centerpiece of the morning and evening Jewish prayer services. The first verse encapsulates the monotheistic essence of Judaism: "Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one", found in Deuteronomy 6. 4. ... Observant Jews consider the Shema to be the most important part of the prayer service in Judaism, and its twice-daily recitation as a mitzvah (religious commandment). It is traditional for Jews to say the Shema as their last words, and for parents to teach their children to say it before they go to sleep at night ... Originally, the Shema consisted of only one verse: Deuteronomy 6. 4'.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shema\\_Yisrael](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shema_Yisrael)

See also ... [http://www.hebrew4christians.com/Scripture/Torah/The\\_Shema/the\\_shema.html](http://www.hebrew4christians.com/Scripture/Torah/The_Shema/the_shema.html) and ...

<http://followtherabbi.com/guide/detail/he-went-to-synagogue>

It is said upon arising in the morning and upon going to sleep at night. It is the first prayer that a Jewish child is taught to say. It is the last words a Jew says prior to death.

But if there is *only one* God, then He *must* be the God of the Gentiles as well as the God of the Jews. And most certainly the Gentiles could never be justified by keeping the law of Moses (because it had been given, not to them, but to Israel). It followed therefore that the *only* pathway to justification open to *both* of them could be – as it was – the way of faith ('it is one God who will justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith').

<sup>95</sup> For example:

God Moves in a Mysterious Way  
O for a Closer Walk with God  
Sometimes a Light Surprises  
There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood  
What Various Hindrances We Meet  
Ere God Had Built the Mountains  
Hark, My Soul, It Is the Lord!  
Jesus, Where'er Thy People Meet.

<sup>96</sup> H. C. G. Moule, Romans (Expositor's Bible Commentary).

<sup>97</sup> The fuller text is ... 'But the happy period which was to afford me a clear opening of the free mercy of God in Christ Jesus, was now arrived. I flung myself into a chair near the window, and, seeing a Bible there, ventured once more to apply to it for comfort and instruction. The first verse I saw was the 25th of the third of Romans 'whom God set forth as a propitiation in His blood, to be received through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, by reason of the passing by of the sins that had taken place beforehand, through the forbearance of God'. Immediately I received strength to believe it, and the full beams of the Sun of Righteousness shone upon me. I saw the sufficiency of the atonement He had made, my pardon sealed in His blood, and all the fulness and completeness of His justification ... Unless the Almighty arm had been under me, I think I should have died with gratitude and joy ... I could only look up to heaven in silent fear, overwhelmed with love and wonder'.

Memoir of the Early Life of William Cowper, written by himself, published first in 1816, pages 96-97.

Downloadable from ... <https://archive.org/details/memoirearlylife02cowpgoog>

Also in , The Life and Works of William Cowper, by T S Grimshawe, 1836, pages 294-295.

Downloadable from ... [http://archive.org/stream/lifeworksofwilli05cowp/lifeworksofwilli05cowp\\_djvu.txt](http://archive.org/stream/lifeworksofwilli05cowp/lifeworksofwilli05cowp_djvu.txt)

<sup>98</sup> George Müller died 10 March 1898.

<sup>99</sup> The Preaching Tours and Missionary Labours of George Müller (1889). Introduction, Page v – downloadable from ... <http://hopefaithprayer.com/books/Preaching-Tours-and-Missionary-Labours-of-GeorgeMuller-1889.pdf>.

See also ... <http://vbaptist.blogspot.co.uk/2011/09/george-muller-of-bristol.html>.