**“Can I Be Right with God?”**

**(Romans 3:21-26)**

**After two chapters on the reality of our sin and condemnation**

**(and 8 sermons!), we now come to the GREAT NEWS of salvation**

**in Jesus Christ!  Paul answers the important question “Can I be**

**right with God?” by instructing us to…**

**Respond to God’s Revelation (21-22a)**

* **In His Word (21)**

*“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested,*

*being witnessed by the law and the prophets.”*

* **In His Son (22a)**

 *“Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ,*

 *unto all and upon all them that believe...”*

**Receive God’s Salvation (22b-24)**

* **Bad News (22b – 23)**

 *“…for there is no difference; For all have sinned and come short of*

 *the glory of God.”*

* **Good News (24)**

*“Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is*

 *in Christ Jesus.”*

**Rejoice in God’s Vindication (25-26)**

* **Of His Forbearance (25)**

*“Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His*

 *blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are*

 *past, through the forbearance of God.”*

* **Of His Justice (26)**

*“To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just*

 *and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”*

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**Small Group Discussion Guide**

**1. Why is the righteousness of God repeated four times in this**

 **passage of scripture?  (See also 1:17 and 3:5)  How would you**

 **explain God’s righteousness to someone?  How did Jesus display**

 **the righteousness of God in His life and in His death?**

**2. How does Romans 3:23-24 show both the *Bad News* and the**

 ***Good News* of the gospel.  Why are both aspects of the gospel so**

 **important to know and share?  When did these two truths first grip**

 **your heart?**

**3. As you reflect on the words *justified* (declared “Not Guilty” before**

 **God), *redemption* (bought out of slavery of sin and set free), and**

 ***propitiation* (God’s wrath averted onto Christ) – which of these**

 **three truths is most meaningful to you?  Why?**

**4. Read and discuss Romans 3:25-26.  What does the sacrifice of**

 **Christ teach us about God?  Why is the cross so central to**

 **Christianity?**

**Digging Deeper**

**1. There are two Greek words for *redemption* in the New Testament*,***

 ***apolutrosis* and *exagorazo*.  Compare the use of *apolutrosis* in**

 **Romans 3:24; Luke 21:28; Colossians 1:14; Romans 8:23;**

 **Ephesians 1:14; 4:30; 1 Peter 1:18; and Mark 10:45 (ransom), and**

 **the use of *exagorazo* in Galatians 3:13; 4:5; and Ephesians 5:16.**

 **Take a moment to thank God for His great redemption!**

**2. Review the verses that use the word *propitiation* and jot down**

 **your observations of each – Romans 3:25 (from Sunday’s sermon);**

 **Hebrews 9:5 (mercy seat); 1 John 2:2; 4:10; Luke18:13 (merciful);**

 **and Hebrews 2:17 (reconciliation).**

**3. What have we learned so far about Paul’s emphasis that there is**

 ***no difference* between Jews and Gentiles *when it comes to the***

 ***issue of sin and the need for the gospel?*  Consider Romans 1:16;**

 **2:9-11, 28-29; 3:9, 22-23.  See also Romans 3:29 and 10:12-13.**

**4. Read Romans 3:27-31 over several times and then try to write each**

 **verse in your own words.**