

**Sermon or Lesson: Romans 3:22** (NIV based)  
[Lesson Questions included]

TITLE: The Righteousness We Need Comes Only Through Faith In Jesus Christ

INTRO: In continuation from our previous study, we want to next determine what or whom God has designated and supplied to be the means by which we can acquire the needed perfect righteousness from God. And we want to determine what requirements God places on us corrupted humans in this regard. In history past, the answers to these crucial questions were somewhat of a mystery. Let's study our next Bible verse to see what God has now revealed in this regard.

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TRANSITION (and review):

- - Previously, we studied in Romans chapter 3 in verses 9c-18 the predicament all of us humans face of automatically being rejected by God and unable by our own actions or means to make ourselves qualified to meet God's perfect righteousness requirements for being accepted by Him.
  - - We also examined in verses 19-20 the reality that the Old Testament Law does not provide a means by which to achieve the perfect righteousness we need in order to remedy our rejected condition and predicament.
  - - To the contrary, the Old Testament Law actually worsens our predicament, making us conscious of and convicting us of every sin we ever commit in our entire life. (vv.19-20)
  - - But now God has provided a way for us to be rescued from our rejected predicament, by making His perfect righteousness available for each of us to receive. (vv.21ff.)
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READ: Romans 3:22, with verses 20-21 for context

[Theological Definition: 'RIGHTEOUS' - conforming to God's moral standard]

[Lesson Question: Explore and analyze that Jesus Christ is the one that God has designated whom our needed righteousness comes from.]

SECTION POINT: God has designated that faith in Jesus Christ is the means to acquire the needed perfect righteousness from God that we need.

**"This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ"**

- - In this verse is designated the narrow, specific, and only condition under which this righteousness from God is available to us.
- - The means by which this righteousness comes is through faith in Jesus Christ.
  
- - Jesus Christ is the one God has designated whom our needed righteousness comes from.
- - In this verse, Jesus has an identifying title within His name, "Christ", which is from the Greek word 'Christos' for the Hebrew word 'Messiah', which means "Anointed One". (Strong's GRK #5547 - Romans 3:22; Strong's GRK #3323 - John 1:41; Strong's HBR #4899 - Daniel 9:25,26)

- - The Messiah, the Anointed One was foretold in the Old Testament that He would fulfill the means by which righteousness can be made available to us corrupted humans. (Isaiah 53:5,11-12; cf. Luke 24:44-48)

- - While the Old Testament "Law and the Prophets testify" about the Anointed One but do not identify him by a personal name, the New Testament does specifically identify by personal name and "makes known" that Jesus is the Anointed One, the Messiah. (v.21)

- - The Old Testament and the New Testament together as the Holy Bible is the completed written source from which this information comes from God about Jesus Christ, as recorded for us humans to examine millenniums later. (cf. 2 Timothy 3:16)

- - In the Holy Bible, God has now completed the written record of the revealing or making known, and declaring that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One designated and foretold about numerous centuries before He arrived on the Earth to fulfill the providing of a way for us humans to receive this righteousness from God. (Matthew 16:15-16,20)

- - Properly having faith in Jesus Christ necessarily acknowledges the assertions God makes about Jesus in the Holy Bible, why and how He is the one through which our needed righteousness comes.

- - Therefore, a requirement for properly having faith in Jesus Christ is that particular basic information about Jesus Christ must be learned, understood, and believed by every person who desires to acquire this righteousness from God for permanent acceptance by Him.

- - And rejecting any of the assertions that God makes in the Holy Bible about Jesus is in essence calling God a liar, calling Jesus a fraud, and reducing Jesus to something that is less than what is required by God for Jesus to be the Anointed One from whom our perfect righteousness comes.

- - So, to have actual faith in Jesus, each person must take God and Jesus at their word, having faith that what the Holy Bible records about Jesus is truthful, accurate, and complete.

- - Believing in doctrines and assertions in other writings outside of the Holy Bible that do not accurately align with what God says about Jesus in the Holy Bible is erroneous, futile, and not acceptable to God, who is not the one making those erroneous doctrines and assertions known.

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[Lesson Question: Explore and analyze what "believe" is in this context.]

SECTION POINT: God will give this righteousness to every person He determines has the kind of faith in Jesus Christ that He requires.

**"to all who believe"**

- - This perfect righteousness from God comes "to" and "upon" every person who believes in Jesus Christ. (Strong's #1519 - "to, or into"; #1909 - "upon, or superimposition, over")

- - There is a distinction in the original Greek in verse 22 of both "to" and "upon", suggesting this righteousness is inexorably linked to proper faith - i.e. it is automatically given or extended to and upon the person the very moment the person establishes proper faith acceptable to God.

- - The distinction of "to" and "upon" further suggests that this righteousness from God becomes an inherent part of the person, meaning it attaches to, infuses into, and takes up residence in the person's being or personality, thus adding or inserting God's perfect righteousness into the person's sinful corrupted unrighteousness so they are both present within the person simultaneously thereafter. (cf. 2 Corinthians 1:21-22)

Therefore from this distinction of "to" and "upon" in verse 22, this righteousness that comes from God through faith in Jesus Christ has at least two aspects to it:

- - 1. This righteousness exerts an outer judicial effect that changes the person's legal standing, overturning the person's previous unaccepted verdict to now being accepted by God.

- - 2. This righteousness also exerts an inner psychological effect that endeavors to change the person's personality - influencing, convincing, and working to transform the person from thinking and behaving in sinful corrupted unrighteous ways into thinking and behaving in godly holy righteous ways.

- - This righteousness from God comes to or is given to "all" or every person who properly believes - that is believing in accordance with what God requires.

- - And conversely, this righteousness from God is not given to those people who do not properly believe - that is not believing in minimum accordance with what God requires.

- - The phrase "to all who believe" signifies that each person must individually and personally believe, doing this on their own, for oneself.

- - Properly believing does not happen or occur involuntarily; it is a conscious and specific choice of one's own will, self-taking the initiative and self-making the decision to believe.

- - Believing must be an actual voluntary personal decision, and being coerced to believe or faking believing are not authentic, thereby not accepted by God, who reads our minds and knows if our believing is authentic or not. (cf. 1 Samuel 16:7)

- - Of course, having faith or believing requires each person to place their faith or their trust in something, in this case it is placing one's trust in the information supplied by God as recorded in the Holy Bible about Jesus, the Christ.

- - Therefore, having faith or believing requires making an informed decision that is based on sufficient and correct information.

- - And having faith or believing also requires then making a commitment to entrust oneself to the object of one's faith, in this case committing to entrust one's eternal future solely on, and in, and to Jesus.

- - As an illustration, suppose you want to fly in a jet plane to a distant city. So, you buy your ticket, find the correct terminal in the airport, and stand at the gate ready to board the plane. The plane pulls up to the gate, opens its door, and starts loading passengers to go to that distant city. You look out the window and watch the work crew fuel the plane, inspect the tires, and check the engines. Everything is in excellent working order for this flight and the final announcement is made to board the plane. With your ticket in your hand, standing in the gate right in front of the door to board the plane, you stand there and do not move. The door to the jet plane closes, leaving you still standing there in the gate as it taxis out to the runway and takes off for that distant city without you.

Did you believe the jet plane would get you to that distant city safely? No, otherwise you would have taken the step of faith to get on the plane. You knew all about the plane and the flight but you failed to commit yourself by faith.

- - Having faith in Jesus Christ is more than merely knowing all about Him, it is genuinely committing oneself, one's life, and one's future to Jesus in faith.

- - By necessity and from the context of the surrounding verses, the placing of one's faith in Jesus needs to be solely in Him and not additionally in anything else to acquire one's needed righteousness. (vv.10-12,20)

- - Remember that believing in the Old Testament Law is insufficient for acquiring the needed righteousness. (v.20)

- - And further notice in this verse that merely believing in God is insufficient for acquiring the needed righteousness, as is merely believing in 'Jehovah', 'Yahweh' (v.9 - "Jews"), 'Allah', or any characterizations, variations, or offshoots of God that are other than in Jesus Christ.

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[Lesson Question: Explore and analyze what "no difference" is.]

SECTION POINT: No exceptions will be made in this requirement that each person must have faith in Jesus Christ.

**"[for] there is no difference"** (Strong's #1063 "for" (omitted in the NIV))

- - There will be "no difference", no "variation", no "distinction" made in the implementation of this activity of God in giving this righteousness. (Strong's #1293; NAS)

- - God will give no preferential treatment, nor any bending or waiving of the requirements to anyone, no matter what their religious background or ethnicity - the requirement of having faith in Jesus Christ will be the same for everyone, whether "Jews" or "Gentiles". (v.9d)

- - This requirement of properly having faith in Jesus Christ is very specific, narrow, strict, rigid, and exclusive of other methods and beliefs, but it is inclusive of every person who properly believes in Jesus Christ. (cf. Matthew 7:13-14)

- - God says there is only one way to acquire His perfect righteousness to be accepted by Him, and that way comes through faith in Jesus Christ - no exceptions, period. (cf. John 14:6)

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BIG IDEA: God has now revealed that faith in Jesus Christ is the only means by which we can acquire His perfect righteousness we need to be accepted by Him.

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APPLICATIONS:

- - Do you have faith?

- - And if so, what is the basis of your faith - what or whom is it based on?

- - Your faith and the means by which you think you are going to acquire being accepted by God - are these based on anything other than what God dictates and requires as stated in this passage?
- - Do you really think God will break the requirements He has established and grant you an exemption or exception from having the required perfect righteousness?
- - Do you really think God has other means by which He will give you perfect righteousness or that He will accept you without any perfect righteousness?
- - To have faith in or believe in or trust in anything other than Jesus Christ is to label God as being inconsistent, or inept, or confused, or wishy-washy in the administration of His program, and therefore to you God is not really an all-powerful all-knowing deity.
- - Do you think this is wise to essentially label God as inconsistent and inept, considering He created the entire universe just by speaking it to be so?

- - Each of you today should re-examine the basis of your faith to ensure that it is correctly aligned with what God is pronouncing here.
- - This is eternal acceptance by God that you are dealing with here, and you cannot afford to get this wrong.

- - A concept to ponder: What nature would a being need to have and what actions would that being have to take in order to be able to provide perfect righteousness to perhaps billions of us corrupted humans? Could an angel accomplish this? Or could a human accomplish this, perhaps a prophet? In other words, what nature does Jesus have that enabled Him to successfully provide perfect "righteousness from God" to perhaps billions of us corrupted humans over the course of human history?

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