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Romans, 3 verses. 23 and 24. These are God's words for all. Have sinned and fall short of the glory of God being justified, freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. And so far the reading of Gods inspired and denarent word. Think, as we noted last week, we've been eager.

Since chapter 1 verse 16. Verse 17 to hear the greatness of the power of God for our salvation to hear the greatness of that righteousness. That is revealed in the gospel from faith and for faith, that greatness, that made the Apostle unashamed to come and preach. This gospel. Even in Rome, We began last week to hear about the greatness of the gospel, the greatness of the righteousness that is revealed in the gospel.

And in fact, we had originally intended to take from verse 21 through verse 24 but there was enough just in those two verses and enough just in these two verses that even moving very quickly it was two weeks worth just to consider the greatness of the righteousness that has given us in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We left off last week hearing for there is no difference. And now we hear the reason for there being no difference in verse 23, for all, have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. And so, we learn there that this being justified in verse 24 is a justification or a righteousness before God.

That is as great as his own glory and so, glorious righteousness, will be the first thing that we hear about from these two verses tonight and then free righteousness being justified. Freely by his grace free righteousness will hear in the second place and then costly righteousness free to us, but still quite costly in what was paid for it.

Through the redemption that is in Christ. Jesus, And so not just costly righteousness, but righteousness, that is in a person. And so personal righteousness in the last place. So first, Glorious righteousness. There's no difference for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. We've been hearing for a couple of chapters.

Now since verse 18 of chapter 1, that the wrath of God is revealed against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men. And in, what did this unrighteousness? And ungodliness consists Well in that they knew God. But they suppressed the truth in their unrighteousness. So that, they though, they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks.

And of course, immediately, our hearts can dem us for, we too have. So often fallen short of glorifying God and giving him. Thanks. We have been quite pleased with ourselves on occasion. Only remembering late in are response to something that it is God, who has done this. And we We repent by God's grace.

So we see how awful that is. That we would feel so full of ourselves and we turn and we give him glory. We often realize when we're grumbling how unthankful we have been for the good that we have received and we find that we are guilty of the very thing that is at the center of the unrighteousness and ungodliness against which the wrath of God is revealed.

And so we feel the pain of the falling short, the sinning and falling short of the glory of God in verse 23. But this is coming in the context, not of the revelation of the wrath of God against unrighteousness. But in the context of the revelation of the righteousness of God for sinners through faith.

So he's begun saying in verse 21. Now, the righteousness of God, apart from the law is revealed and he goes on immediately to say in verse 24 after immediately, after what we were just now considering being justified freely by his grace. And what does this mean? It means that the righteousness of which we had fallen short, is the righteousness that has given to us in the gospel.

It is a righteousness equivalent to having fully glorified and God and fully given him. Thanks Indeed. Who is it? Who has glorified God? And given him. Thanks who has adored. God and thanked, God, and praised God in our place. Whose obedience who's worship? Who's thankfulness stands for us? Through faith.

Is it not the thankfulness of Jesus? The love and adoration of God by Jesus Christ. Indeed, not only according to his human nature, although it is, but it is His divine person who has loved and thanked and worshiped God in accord, with his human nature. So even as we heard last week, it is the very righteousness of of God himself that we receive.

And we are accounted as if we had glorified God as much as God, glorifies God. So, we have a righteousness in the gospel that has given us through faith in Jesus Christ. That is, as great as the glory of God and no longer. Do we say, have fallen short.

We had fallen short. But if you belong to God through faith in Jesus Christ, You can turn verse 23 on its head or rather God has turned verse 23 on its head For all through faith in Christ or who have faith in Christ have been righteous and attained to the glory of God which is no wonder then that the Apostle would be so excited.

So glad to come to Rome and announce to them, the greatness of this God, this gospel that they had already believed. But who of us can say that we have plumbed the depths of the greatness of a righteousness that attains to the glory of God. And so there was more work to be done in them and and will be and he is eager to preach this gospel to them For us.

Then when we realize the greatness of the righteousness that we have in Christ Jesus, that it is a righteousness that attains to properly glorifying God, and it is the righteousness of the glorious. God himself. There are a couple of immediate applications One. Is we must acknowledge that we could never contribute to this righteousness And so we must never think that we have produced the willingness or produced the choice and we have, we been willing.

Have we chosen? Yes, we have. But that is by grace as we'll hear again, In a moment, We are not the ones who produced it or powered it. That is the Lord to give even faith as a gift and we cannot add to this righteousness. So, great is the righteousness that we have received that it is but as foolish and we should be horrified and at the thought and banish the thought that we could ever increase or decrease Our standing with God.

How can you a hinder? The standing that you have with the Living God? If this is the righteousness that you have the righteousness of Jesus, the righteousness, that attains, to the glory of God. And that's why there is no difference. As the end of verse 22 says to all and on all who believe for there is no difference for all have sinned and falsehort of the glory of God, being justified freely.

And when we're justified, we are counted as righteous and having attained. Therefore to the glory of God and we can never look down upon a brother or a sister in Christ. Having a credible profession of faith knowing that everyone who believes in Jesus has the righteousness of Jesus. And so in the first place, Glorious righteousness and the second place, free righteousness being justified.

Freely that is without cost. We contribute to nothing, we paid nothing. Not only is nothing required, nothing can be paid because it must be in the second part here, under this subpoint, by grace, being justified freely by grace, as we're going to hear and the next chapter in verse 4.

Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. So if we could pay anything, if we could contribute something, then something would be owed to us and it would no longer be grace as he will say. Again in verse 6 of chapter 11, and if by grace, then it is no longer of works.

Otherwise, grace is no longer grace, If there is of works. It is no longer grace otherwise work is no longer work. And so it is free in that we did not pay anything, indeed. It is by grace, which means we cannot pay anything. And this word grace is much broader than we often think.

As we have repeated, many times in the preaching, and teaching in this place We often or most often I think hear about or think about the idea of grace as blessing for those who deserve only curse and it is that but it is also strength for those who have only weakness and we have often directed our attention to second Corinthians chapter 12.

Where he says, in verse 9, my grace is sufficient for you for my strength is made perfect and weakness. It also life in and for those who from themselves, have only death And so Galatians 5:21 although not explicitly using that word is, describing the life of grace. I've been crucified with Christ, It is no longer I who live but he who lives in me, the life, I live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.

I've only death in myself but in him, I have life and it is in his life that I live Indeed. It is also goodness. God's goodness four. And from in those who have only sin and evil from themselves, as the apostle tells the Corinthians, what do you have that?

You have not received and if you have received it, if it is a gift. Then why do you boast any goodness that we find in ourselves is not from ourselves? And so we we get this composite picture of the grace of God as that, which God has in the place of that, which we utterly lack God's riches in the place of our dustitution and no more nowhere.

Is that more clear and more necessary then when we receive the blessing of Christ, the blessedness of Christ and which he has earned, which is rightly his, as an heir. And for which he is also earned by his work, in the place of the curse that we deserve. And so we are justified freely by his grace.

God is the one who pays the price, we pay no price at all. That brings us, then to the fact that although, it is free to us, it is not free. It is not cheap. It is in fact, quite costly. Both in the value of what has been purchased, as we've just heard it is righteousness.

That is as great as God's glory, but it's also costly not just in the value of what has been purchased, but in the price, that was paid being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ. Jesus. And we think about the costliness of this, for Jesus.

There was no price to be paid to be God for. He is God, He considers equality with God does not consider He quality with God. Something to be grasped but he paid greatly. In order to

become a man, he who is God added to himself humanity. And so he added creaturelyness to himself, He who is the Creator, became a creature, even that far the price has been infinite beyond our imagining, but he didn't just become a creature.

He became a man. He became a man in a low condition. He became a helpless embryo and then only slightly less helpless baby. And and so on But all creatures are helpless. All creatures depend upon God for breath. For existence all men depend continually upon God for the continuation of our souls, and the function of our minds and the upholding of all of the, all of the spiritual faculties that we have, let alone the physical.

We pray to him even for our daily bread. And the son of God, God, the Son, the eternally, begotten, the Holy One, The one who is the brilliance of the glory of God himself. The exact imprint of his nature added this creaturely dependence. And when he became a man, he became a poor one, He became the baby of a poor couple who when they came and they paid the redemption price at the temple.

They paid the poor. Poor people's offering with the two birds and so he was born of a woman, a low condition, which has humiliation the cost that he paid in this redemption. That is referred to in verse 24 was even higher. The cost was even higher was death.

He who knew no sin died, which is the wages of sin, his blood was said for us, this is the purchase price to which the same apostle refers when he's talking to the Ephesian elders and Acts chapter 20, and he's telling them to take heed to themselves and to the flock of God among whom the Holy Spirit has made them overseers which he that as God bought with his own blood.

As we've just been thinking, the fact that God now has blood that the second person of the Triune God has added to himself. Creaturelyness the fact that he has blood is an infinitely high price and then that blood was shed to purchase, sinners to purchase our righteous standing to purchase our adoption to purchase our salvation and not just death.

But as we began in second Corinthians 5:21, he who knew no sin For our sakes. He who knew no sin became sin was made to be sin, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him. As we will hear, Lord willing in the next verse. God set him forth exhibited him as a propitiation by his blood.

It's not just that he died. It's that he died under the wrath of God's wrath. That was entirely consumed upon him. That's what the propitiation word means and will take some time Lord willing next week to talk and hear and think about that word. But this is the greatest part of the cost that the, but we call the cry of dereliction.

The cry from out from under the wrath of God and Psalm 22 my God. My God. Why have you forsaken? Me has only ever been true of one who believed one, who was righteous. The one who was forsaken in our place, There are times under the chastening hand of God, when we feel as if we might have been.

And it has our experience. We are unable to perceive in any other way than by faith in the Word of God that we are not forsaken, but we are not. And yet The second person of the Trinity in the moment in which he was making the greatest display of obedience and the moment in which he was the most worthy of the love of God, We must never think that the Father was hating the Son at that moment.

No, the Lord Jesus himself. Said for this reason, the Father loves me because I lay down my life for the sheep. This was the greater obedience. This was when the Son himself was most

lovely, but in the moment of his greatest loveliness, he was enduring the hell of the wrath of God for the sins of all.

Whom the Father had chosen him. All whom he had committed to redeem all whom he entered the world to redeem all whom he would bring to faith and gather to himself and sanctified glorified.

This is the greatest cost that could be paid and it is the very cost that was paid. And so when we say is free talking about its freeness to us, We aren't talking about something of small value or cheaply obtained. It is through the redemption that is in Christ, Jesus.

And that brings us to The last point. This righteousness, is not an abstraction that is not a quantity. It's not an asset that can be transferred. Sometimes you hear the analogy made when we're trying to understand, that justification is being counted righteous before God through faith. And and so they'll use the analogy of the shared bank account or the transferred assets or something like that.

But you don't receive righteousness as something that is transferred to you or given to you, You receive righteousness in the union with Jesus Christ. It's something that you obtain personally. This is one reason why when you're remaining sin flares up and you are worried about your spiritual condition and do I have righteousness that the great solution is to cling to Christ by faith.

Because righteousness is not something that can be had, or not had in and of itself as an abstraction for the believer. It's something that has had in Christ and if you have him you have righteousness. And that, of course, ought to be what frightens us. The most, what concerns us the most.

If we find that our hearts and minds seem to be functioning like that of an unbeliever and the Holy Spirit, troubling us with it. Is already a symptom of some spiritual life or some spiritual health but don't settle for the symptoms when you are troubled, lay hold of Christ, It is a person in whom you have the righteousness of God.

It's not the gospel of the righteousness of God. It's not the gospel of the power of God, although the gospel is the power of God, It is the gospel of God, concerning His Son as the apostle said. In the opening of this letter, whenever you are in spiritual trouble, the answer is a person.

Whenever you are rejoicing over the benefits that you have in the gospel and what benefit is there? So great, as the righteousness of God himself, counted for you. Having been counted righteous and attained to the glory of God. What you are rejoicing over? What we ought to rejoice over is the one the person in whom We have received it.

So there's in a very true and real sense. Jesus is the gospel. Now why would we ever want to add our own works to something like that? And how could someone who understands what this is that God has given us. Think that believing these things about what God has done for sinners.

In Jesus Christ, would somehow lead to licentious living. No. It's the abuse of the doctrine of free grace that could lead to licentious living But it's never the truth about the glory of the righteousness that you have been given and the costliness of that righteousness that you have been freely given and especially the personal nature that it has been given to you in the person of Jesus Christ.

Know this this turns up our love This stirs up our gratitude. This stirs up our desire that he in whom we have been declared righteous would be glorified by our walking in those good works which he prepared beforehand that we in which we might walk that it might be shown to all the world that we have been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

Not so that we could boast but so that he could be glorified with us as His workmanship created in Christ Jesus. The believer who embraces these doctrines as we grow in embracing these doctrines, these truths. We will love our Savior more and we will love His praise more. And we will love more to walk in those deeds that bring him.

Praise as our Savior so that we will not be ashamed of the gospel. Either not ashamed. To tell it. Whenever we have opportunity not ashamed to display, the fruit of it that we might have more opportunity to tell It is the power of God for salvation. And as we've been hearing from these two verses, It is also the glory of God in our salvation, the grace of God, for our salvation, redemption by God, himself for our salvation.

Indeed The gospel is that God Himself has become our salvation In Jesus Christ. Amen, I have a moment, so let's pray.

Our Father we thank you that. What I could not see or ear. Hear nor the heart of men. Imagine is that which you in your infinite. Goodness, your steadfast love. You're perfect. Wisdom had devised. That it would be the Lord of glory. Who was crucified for us? When we thank you that you hid these things from those who are wise in themselves and had they known, they would not have crucified him but that you have revealed them to babies like us.

Like, we are that. We might believe in Jesus Christ and be righteous with your own righteousness because You have made us righteous in Him. And so, glorify yourself in your Son, we pray. Amen.