

The Book of Romans

The Gospel of God

Why begin the gospel with God's wrath against all mankind?

(Romans 1:18-3:20)

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

¹⁷ For in it *the righteousness of God* is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS *man* SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

(Romans 1:16-17)

"Righteousness of God"

A. Biblical Usage

- action not an attribute ("saving activity")
- as ruler and judge of the earth, God acts repeatedly to restore right order in His good creation
- it necessarily includes retributive justice – salvation through judgment/condemnation
- God's own vindication – He acts for His own sake

"Righteousness of God"

B. Context of a "Contention"

- a legal dispute between God, the Creator, and those who contend against Him (or His people)
- God's righteousness brings deliverance for His people through the judgment of His enemies
- God Himself is vindicated as God alone, and His people are vindicated ("justified")

"Righteousness of God"

C. Connection to Romans 1:18-3:20

- God's righteous judgment against sinners is the essential condition for the revelation of His saving righteousness
- God has a contention against all humanity (idolaters) that results in every mouth being closed and God being justified in His condemnation

“Righteousness of God”

C. Connection to Romans 1:18-3:20

“...there can be no justification of the sinner which is not simultaneously a justification of God in his wrath against the sinner.” (M. Seifrid; *Christ, Our Righteousness*)

- God's first demand on us is that we believe His judgment against us

Concluding Statement (3:20)

“for by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.”

➤ The Law's Inability and Function

- the fallen human being is incapable of fulfilling the Law's demand for unqualified love toward God and neighbor

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➤ The Law's Inability and Function

- the works of the Law cannot satisfy the demand of the Law, because they cannot change the idolatrous person from whom they proceed

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➤ The Law's Inability and Function

- the Law functions to bring us the experience of sin and effect our confession of God's just claim against us