

# III

## Grace Alone

### ROMANS 3:21-24

But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—<sup>22</sup> the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction:<sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,<sup>24</sup> and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...

READ | ROMANS 3:21–24

## THINK ABOUT

What does it mean to fall short? At school or work, we are evaluated on our performance. When I did not perform to the expectations my parents had set for school, I dreaded taking my report card home. At most companies, you have an annual performance review where your boss sits across the desk to evaluate how well you are doing your job. During those performance reviews, there are always areas for improvement. As we look at this passage, we will never be able to meet the requirements of God's righteousness. The task is impossible. We are too sinful, selfish, and ungrateful.

## APPLY

It is good to take an honest look at yourself and your standing before God. James 1:22–25 tells us to look in the mirror. We often look in the mirror and play the comparison game. Instead of comparing ourselves to others, look in the mirror of God's Word and ask, "What does God see?" Where have you fallen short of God's demands of your life? These are not easy questions to answer! When we take a hard look at our motives, thoughts, actions, and obedience, it is humbling to know that the God of the universe still loves us! When we are saved by grace, God sees the blood of His beautiful and majestic Son, Jesus Christ. He no longer sees your sin and failures, rather He sees us as a son or daughter. Fall in love with His grace and mercy today, and repent of the sins in your life that keep you from pursuing Him fully.

## ASK

*Are there areas of your life that you are not living up to God's standards?*

*When is the last time you repented and asked for forgiveness from your family for your shortcomings?*

*How does the grace of God affect you each day and your view of life?*



## THE BIG IDEA

*After establishing that all of us are sinners and hopeless on our own, Paul now explains that our only hope is in Christ and His finished work on the cross. Having declared us guilty of sin, in Christ we can be justified by faith.*

## KEY POINTS

- Our salvation is not according to the law as it is weak (v. 21).
- Our salvation is a gift by faith in Christ alone (vv. 22a, 24).
- Salvation is offered equally to all mankind (vv. 22b–23).
- Salvation is offered freely by grace (v. 24).

## DOCTRINE

**Justification** is the declaration by God that sinners trusting Christ are now righteous. In the grace of God, Christ's righteousness is imputed to them.

## LIFE APPLICATION

- The law is weak in that it could not bring us into relationship with Christ.
- Ever since sin entered the world, a payment that included blood was required.
- God has graciously and freely offered salvation to all people everywhere.

## DISCUSSION

- How does Revelation 5 aid your imagination of the law that is "weak"?
- With the Old Testament sacrificial system, why was Christ's death needed?
- Why is it necessary for us to be saved by "grace alone"?



## HYMN

*“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ — by grace you have been saved — and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.” — EPHESIANS 2:4–7*

## Amazing Grace

1. A - maz - ing grace! how sweet the sound! That  
 2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, And  
 3. Thru man - y dan - gers, toils and snares I  
 4. When we've been there ten thou - sand years, Bright  
 5. A - maz - ing grace! how sweet the sound! That

saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but  
 grace my fears re - lieved. How pre - cious did that  
 have al - read - y come. 'Tis grace hath bro't me  
 shin - ing as the sun, We've no less days to  
 saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but

now I'm found; Was blind, but now I see.  
 grace ap - pear The hour I first be - lieved!  
 safe thus far, And grace will lead me home.  
 sing God's praise Than when we'd first be - gun.  
 now I'm found; Was blind, but now I see.

*Text: John Newton, 1779* ♪ *Tune: Virginia Harmony, 1831*