

## Only Jesus Can Make Us Right with God

Scripture: [Romans 3:21-31](#)

### Big Idea:

God provided the only way to Heaven through Jesus!

### Call to Action:

This week, think about how Jesus took your place for the punishment of your sin.

### Family Action:

Talk with your kids about these hard topics throughout the week. Let them ask you questions

## Exposure to Exposition & Exploring the Scriptures: (15-20 mins)

- Bible Drills (Memorization of OT & NT Book order)
- Guide the children to [Romans 3:21-31](#) in the Bible. (Help them as needed, NT vs OT)
- Say: We are going to continue through Paul's letter to the people of Rome.
- We will learn that the gospel is God's power to save everyone who believes, and we should never be ashamed of Jesus.
- Read aloud. (Ask kids to place their pointer fingers on V21 and follow along)

### Review:

vv.1-15 Paul's Introduction of the letter

vv. 16-17 How we are made right with God (main point of letter)

vv. 18-32 How you're NOT made right; Lie #1 Worship of the Creation (Idolatry/ Paganism)

vv. 2:1-16 Lie #2 Being "good" doesn't make us right with God (1-11) & beginning of Lie #3 Moralism/ Laws (vv12-16)

vv. 2:17-29 Cont. Lie #3 Following Laws/Rules doesn't make us right with God. (Laws/ Nomianism)

vv. 3:1-20 Lie #4 Being born a Jew gets you into Heaven. (Judaism)

vv. 3:21-31 The Righteousness of God, freely given to those who believe.

## Opening Question

"Have you ever tried your hardest to be 'good enough'- only to mess up anyway? Paul says that no matter how hard we try, we can't make ourselves right with God. But God made a way- through Jesus!"

We cannot reach Heaven by following rules, laws, or even by the family we are born into; God looks at the heart. Because Paul has addressed all the ways you cannot get to Heaven (be 100% perfect) he will now address how God made it possible.

### [ROMANS 3:21-31 NLT - CHRIST TOOK OUR PUNISHMENT](#)

**21** But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him

without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. <sup>22</sup> We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are.

<sup>23</sup> For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. <sup>24</sup> Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins. <sup>25</sup> For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood. This sacrifice shows that God was being fair when he held back and did not punish those who sinned in times past, <sup>26</sup> for he was looking ahead and including them in what he would do in this present time. God did this to demonstrate his righteousness, for he himself is fair and just, and he makes sinners right in his sight when they believe in Jesus.

<sup>27</sup> Can we boast, then, that we have done anything to be accepted by God? No, because our acquittal is not based on obeying the law. It is based on faith. <sup>28</sup> So we are made right with God through faith and not by obeying the law.

<sup>29</sup> After all, is God the God of the Jews only? Isn't he also the God of the Gentiles? Of course he is. <sup>30</sup> There is only one God, and he makes people right with himself only by faith, whether they are Jews or Gentiles. <sup>31</sup> Well then, if we emphasize faith, does this mean that we can forget about the law? Of course not! In fact, only when we have faith do we truly fulfill the law.

Paul has shot down all four lies people in Rome believed got you to Heaven, by exposing the flaws:

- Worship of Creation, not the Creator
- Being "good enough," however, ignores the obvious sin
- Following a set of rules/laws (even God's law) only exposes how imperfect we really are
- Leaning on being Jewish exposes an unfair God, showing favoritism

The problem to be solved: **Sin nature**

- We all descend from a common ancestor who passed along his sinful nature through reproduction
- We were born with a spiritual birth defect, and this defect must be corrected before we may enjoy fellowship with God
- It's our sinful nature that bars us from heaven, and we cannot change that ourselves.

Because we couldn't solve this problem in our own strength, **God made a way available to us:**

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[ROMANS 3:21-22](#) But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. [22](#) We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are.

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In verses 21-26, Paul explains God's amazing plan to bring people to Heaven, even though we all have a sinful nature.

- V21-22 I can't earn it by rules or even God's law- God must make us right.
  - God revealed His plan- we didn't discover it. (v.21a)
  - Being "right with God" doesn't come from rule-keeping or trying harder. (v.21b)
  - God's plan removes our guilt and gives us His righteousness (perfection). (v.21)
  - Moses (the Law) and the Prophets told us ahead of time that God would give His people a new covenant in Jesus and forgive sins. He would make us right with Himself one day. (v.21)
  - God gives us His righteousness; we know we have been made-right with God through the faith we have. (trusting Jesus).
  - This is how ANYONE, for all time has been born-again, or made-right. It's not a new way.
  - **Kid Point:** God showed us His plan of making us right, and it's ALL His work! We must trust in that for salvation.

### Big Theology Words

*Righteous/ Righteousness*- Perfection, made-right with a perfect God

*Old & New Covenant:*

**The Old Covenant** was God's promise to Israel that He would bless them if they obeyed His laws. They offered animal sacrifices for their sins, but those couldn't last forever.

**The New Covenant** came through Jesus, who became the final sacrifice so we can be forgiven forever

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[ROMANS 3:23-24](#) For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. [24](#) Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.

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If all men are in the same predicament (sinful), then all men need the same solution.

- V23-24 We must have the nature of God. So, how does God give us His nature?
  - Everyone sins and falls short of God's perfect standard. (v.23)
  - Our sin deserves punishment by God. Jesus' perfect life and His death was the punishment for sin. (v.23)
  - Jesus didn't deserve punishment. Therefore, His death was free to give away. (v.24)

- He made us right with God. (Justified or Justification) (v.24)
- Making us right with God (Justification) is the gift God gives to all who believe.
- **Kid Point:** God's plan of salvation treats everyone equally: all have sinned, and all are offered the same free gift of forgiveness through Jesus.

### Big Theology Word:

*Justified*- means God declares us "not guilty." Made-right.

The punishment for sin (disobeying God's word) is death or separation from a Holy God.

- ([Genesis 2:16-17](#) But the Lord God warned him, "You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden — 17 except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die.)
- The death of an innocent was required (blood) to pay for the sin ([Genesis 3:21](#) And the Lord God made clothing from animal skins for Adam and his wife.)
- This is the first death in the Bible.

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[ROMANS 3:25-26](#) For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood. This sacrifice shows that God was being fair when he held back and did not punish those who sinned in times past, [26](#) for he was looking ahead and including them in what he would do in this present time. God did this to demonstrate his righteousness, for he himself is fair and just, and he makes sinners right in his sight when they believe in Jesus.

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The only way to Heaven. Paul clarifies all man-made notions of how to be made right with God boldly here: God demonstrated His perfect fairness and love by sending Jesus to take our place. Through His death, the price for sin was fully paid, and anyone who believes in Him is made right with God forever.

- V25-26 Jesus took my punishment so I could be right with God!
  - God provided his son as His sacrifice (giving Himself in our place), showing that God is both fair (He punished sin) and loving (He provided the substitute). (v.25)
  - God required a perfect payment for sin- Jesus' death satisfied that fair payment for sin. (v.25)
  - Sinners are made right with God when they believe in Jesus.
  - God waited patiently to send Jesus at just the right time, showing God held back due penalty for sin (delayed judgment). (v.25b)
  - Jesus' sacrifice proves that God is both just (sin must be punished) and fair (He provided the payment Himself). (v.26)
  - This is called the Great Exchange- Jesus took our penalty, and God credited us with His righteousness when we believe.
  - **Kid Point:** Jesus' death on the cross was the payment that satisfied God's justice so that sinners could be forgiven and made right with Him.

**Big Theology Word:**

*Sacrifice*- Took the punishment for sin himself in our place. To take the place of someone to protect/ love them.

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[ROMANS 3:27-31](#) Can we boast, then, that we have done anything to be accepted by God? No, because our acquittal is not based on obeying the law. It is based on faith. [28](#) So we are made right with God through faith and not by obeying the law.

[29](#) After all, is God the God of the Jews only? Isn't he also the God of the Gentiles? Of course he is. [30](#) There is only one God, and he makes people right with himself only by faith, whether they are Jews or Gentiles.[31](#) Well then, if we emphasize faith, does this mean that we can forget about the law? Of course not! In fact, only when we have faith do we truly fulfill the law.

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- V27-31 God's plan of salvation is based on God's Work (grace), not our works!
  - We can't brag about earning our way to God; salvation is a gift, made known through faith, not something we achieve.
  - God is the same for everyone- He saves all people the same way, by His grace through faith in Jesus.
  - Faith doesn't cancel God's Law- it fulfills it, because Jesus perfectly kept the Law for us.
  - Trusting Jesus means we depend on what He did, not what we do.
  - **Kid Point:** I can't brag about being good enough- Jesus did it all for everyone who believes!

**Observation Questions (What did it say?)**

1. What does Paul say is different about how we become right with God now? (*v.21 Without keeping the law*)
2. Who has sinned and fallen short of God's glory? (*v.23 All*)
3. How does God make people right with Him? (*v.24-25 let kids explain*)

**Understanding Questions (What does it mean?)**

1. What does "righteousness of God" mean? (*Being made right in God's eyes.*)
2. What did Jesus' death on the cross do for us? (*Paid for the penalty for sin, He didn't deserve it, so He freely gives what He did to me. God sees Jesus' sacrifices in my place.*)
3. How does Jesus' sacrifice show that God is fair and loving at the same time? (*His death paid for sin, because it had to be punished, but He also took the punishment willingly for me and instead of me.*)

**Application Questions (What should I do?)**

1. When you make mistakes or sin, how can you remember what Jesus has already done for you?

2. Is there something in your life that makes you feel like you have to “earn” God’s love? How can you let go of that?
  3. Who can you tell this week about the “Great Exchange”- that Jesus took our punishment and gave us His perfection?
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### Activity #1: “The Great Exchange”

Supplies Needed: Sticky Notes, Marker, White sheet or blanket

#### Instructions:

1. Ask for one volunteer to come to the front.
2. Have the other kids think of sins people might do (like lying, being unkind, or disobeying) and write them on sticky notes.
3. Stick all the “sins” onto the volunteer to show how sin covers us.
4. Once the child is covered in sticky notes, gently place a clean white sheet or blanket over them.

#### Talk About It:

Explain that the white sheet represents Jesus covering our sins. When we believe in Him, our sins are no longer seen—God sees Jesus’ righteousness instead.

“This is the Great Exchange! Jesus took our sin on Himself when He died on the cross, and He gave us His perfect righteousness instead.”

End by reading [Romans 3:23-24](#) out loud together:

“For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.”

**Key Point:** We can’t earn God’s love- it’s a gift given through faith in Jesus!

### Activity #2 : Memory Verse

Come up with moves:

[Romans 3:23-24](#) *“For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.”*

### Activity #3:

For Older Youth Students, see separate printable handout.

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## Remind them: What is the Gospel?

Jesus’ perfect life paid for the sins of all who believe. Jesus died on the cross as the punishment for sin. But Jesus did not stay dead, three days later He rose to life (resurrection) defeating the power of death. Believe, and you will be saved!

- We are all sinful. We all deserve the consequence of sin- death.

- Jesus is what saves us from the sin we all have in our bodies. And one day, he'll even give us a new body.

### Supporting Truths Kids Can Grasp:

- Everyone sins- We all do wrong things. ([Romans 3:23](#))
- God made a way- Jesus took our punishment. ([Romans 3:24-25](#))
- We can't earn it- We're saved by believing, not by being "good enough." ([Romans 3:27-28](#))
- Jesus kept the Law for us- When we trust Him, God sees us as perfect. ([Romans 3:31](#))