

LIFE MADE NEW

*A Self-Study on Excerpts from
the Book of Romans*

LESSON 3

*"How Can I Be Right When I
Am So Wrong?"*

This Bible Study Series Provided By:

Herald of Truth

Life Made New Student

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Country: _____

Hope for Life

Response Department

P.O. Box 2439

Abilene, TX 79604-9987

Lesson 3

02105



“Everyone who comes to Jesus stumbles because of Him. He fails to meet our wrong expectations. He calls us to do impossible things or to become something we think we could never become. This is His way of teaching us how much we need Him. He breaks us to pieces so that He can put us back together in His image.”

- Michael Card

Warm Up

Do you have a hard time trusting others? I certainly do at times. When I trust someone else, I am having to rely on them. The matter is out of my hands. I cannot be in control. And my human side cries out saying, “I want to be in control!”

Through God’s grace, however, I am learning to discover that life in Christ is a life of trust, of giving up control. Christianity is a matter of faith in Christ, from beginning to end.

This section of Romans has helped me tremendously in coming to this point in my faith. A verse of a contemporary song says, “Oh, the man of this world will let you down, but Jesus never fails.” I hope that you will find that Jesus is the most trustworthy friend you will ever have.

Getting Into the Word

Read Romans 3:21-4:25.

Underline in your Bible or write down on this sheet how often the words “believe” and “faith” are mentioned.

Key Phrase: “but now.” Note the crucial pivot of 3:21 - “but now.” Up to this point Paul was painting a very grim picture of humanity. Left on our own and trying to be good, you and I stand hopeless. “But now!” But now, in His overflowing love, God has provided a way out. He has given us a way for us to stand before a holy God and be forgiven.

7. What are some characteristics of our Heavenly Father that you learn from this story?

8. What did the older son miss out on by misunderstanding grace?

9. What are some blessings you and I miss out on when we fail to understand that we are saved by grace through faith?

Further Thoughts

Write down any questions you have regarding this lesson.

Prayer Corner

If you have specific prayer concerns, please feel free to list them.

Our staff will pray for you and the matters you mention at our weekly prayer meeting.

3. What did Abraham believe about God that assured him that the Lord would come through with His promise (Romans 4:21)?

4. How does Abraham's story, as described in Romans 4:18-25, show that we are equally hopeless apart from Jesus?

5. From what you have read so far, what do you think it means to put your faith in Jesus Christ?

Digging Deeper

Read the story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11-24.

6. List three things that this father did for the son who returned.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Spend a few minutes meditating especially on 3:21-26. One Bible scholar said that this is possibly the most important single paragraph ever written. That is a paragraph I certainly do not want to overlook!

Key Word: "Justification"

This is not a word we use every day. However, notice how often you may act out the meaning of this word. When we make a mistake at work, our tendency is to blame others. To point the finger at a co-worker. When children get in trouble the familiar cry is "He did it!" "No, she did it!" Is it not hard to take the blame and admit we are wrong? Our human tendency is to want to appear that we did no wrong. That is, we try to justify ourselves.

From the first three chapters of Romans, we have seen clearly that because of our sin, we cannot be considered right (justified) before a holy God. So how can I be right if I am so wrong? The good news is that God has taken care of the problem. He has offered His Son in our place. When we put faith in what Jesus has done for our sins, God justifies us, makes us right. Even when we are guilty! It is like standing before a judge in a law court, knowing that you are guilty of a crime, and the judge declares "not guilty!" You go away a free person.

That is a very difficult truth to grasp. It makes no human sense. But remember, God's ways are not our ways. Maybe that is why we call it amazing grace.

Faith is Dependence

"Faith in a Savior means 100% renunciation of self-reliance. Anyone who understands something of the enormity of sin knows that salvation is possible only through the mercy and power of God. One must, therefore, depend solely upon the sacrifice of Christ on his behalf."

- K.C. Moser

God as a Pursuer of People

Look closely at Romans 3:24, the phrase, “we are justified freely by His grace.” John Stott says, “fundamental to the gospel of salvation is the truth that the saving initiative from beginning to end belongs to God the Father. Grace is God loving, God stooping, God coming to the rescue, God giving himself generously in and through Jesus Christ.”

I have some close friends who have begun an adoption process. They have met with a Christian adoption agency who will help them find a baby that they can raise as their own. This couple is in search of a child. I look forward to the day when they can show with pride and joy this child they searched out and found.

In many ways, that is what our relationship with God is like. He began this search to save lost people, to bring them into His family and adopt them. Ask yourself today, “will I welcome this invitation of love and by faith receive this gift of God’s grace?” The cross opens up the way, the only way, for you and me to be found by the Father. God has made His move. Will I make mine? How could I turn down such a marvelous invitation?

Reflection Questions

1. A rightstanding before God comes from _____, is through faith in _____, and is available to _____ who believe (Romans 3:22).
2. In Romans 3:24, we learn that though we fall short of God’s glory, we can be made righteous (justified) by His _____.
3. Check which of these statements are true, based on Romans 3:22-24. Jesus Christ makes right...
_____ only those who are good enough.
_____ those who quit sinning.
_____ anyone who puts their trust in Him.

4. Abraham was declared righteous before God because he _____ God (Romans 4:1-3).
5. As difficult as it is for us to understand, Romans 4:5 teaches us that God justifies _____ people.
6. When God makes people right (not guilty) it has nothing to do with their works (Romans 4:6).
_____ True _____ False
7. The phrase “it was credited to him as righteous” applies to Abraham but also to us who _____ Jesus (Romans 4:23-24).
8. Who has God provided for us as the focus of our faith (Romans 4:24b-25)? _____

Discussion Questions

1. It is easy to think that God only accepts us when we are good. How does knowing that Jesus died in your place change any feelings that you are not acceptable to God?

2. How does the example of Abraham and David in Romans 4 help you deal with these feelings of not living up to God’s standards?

