

Series: Romans

Title: Things Accomplished Through Faith

Text: Rom 3: 27-31

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Paul's context from Romans 1-3 is that the righteousness of God is manifest in Christ. God's people are made the righteousness of God, not by the sinner's works under the law, but through faith in Christ.

In Romans 1: 16-17, Paul declares that it is through the preaching of the gospel of Christ that the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith.

In the rest of Romans chapter 1 through Romans chapter 2, he shows the sin and idolatry of the Gentiles. Then he declares that there is no difference for the Jew who boasted he was righteous by his works under the law. He too was as guilty as the Gentile who did not have the law. Paul ended Romans 2 declaring that he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, that is by his obedience. He declares that true circumcision is not even outward in the flesh but is inward and spiritual. So then in Romans 3: 9, he concludes there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—all are under sin.

In Romans 3: 19-20, the Holy Spirit moved Paul to declare that the law was not given for us to justify ourselves by our works. The law was given to declare all the world guilty before God and to shut our mouths.

Then in Romans 3: 21-26, he declares that the righteousness of God is manifest by the faith of Christ, without our deeds to the law. The law and the prophets bear witness to the righteousness of God being manifest by the faithful obedience of Christ. God justifies his people freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. God set his Son forth a propitiation through faith in his blood. It was by Christ being the Surety of the old testament saints that God manifest his righteousness in remitting their sins. God set him forth Christ to declare his righteousness, how that God might be just and the Justifier of him that believeth in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, in our text in Romans 3: 27-31, Paul does not change the context. Here he declares "*Things Accomplished Through Faith.*"

Romans 3: 27: Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. 28: Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. 29: *Is he* the God of the Jews only? *is he* not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: 30: Seeing *it is* one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. 31: Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

THE EXCLUSION OF BOASTING

Romans 3: 27: Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law ? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. 28: Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Through faith in Christ boasting is excluded.

God will not allow any sinner to boast in any part of our salvation. He will not allow us to glory in self. God will not allow us to praise self or to give honor to self.

In election, God will not allow the sinner to boast that we chose God or that there was some foreseen attribute that caused God to elect us. It is God's glory to choose whom he will by his free and sovereign grace.

Exodus 33: 18: And [Moses] said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. 19: And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.

In regeneration, God declares that creating his people anew in the righteousness and holiness of Christ is for the praise of his glory.

Romans 2: 29: But he *is* a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God.

Isaiah 42: 7: *Even* every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

So, seeing the very reason God sent forth his Son was to manifest his righteousness, we can be sure God will especially not allow sinners to glory that we made ourselves righteous by our works under the law. It is only in the faithfulness of Christ that believers boast.

Romans 3: 21: But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22: Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Isaiah 45: 25: In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.

Jeremiah 4: 2: And thou shalt swear, The LORD liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory.

Jeremiah 9: 23: Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty *man* glory in his might, let not the rich *man* glory in his riches: 24: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I *am* the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these *things* I delight, saith the LORD.

But works do not exclude boasting. Those who teach that it is up to the sinner to establish the law are not removing all grounds for the sinner to boast.

Romans 4:2: For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.

There is only one doctrine by which man's boasting is excluded. It is the doctrine of faith. God justified his people, making us righteous by Christ's finished work on the cross. When God brings his child to believe on Christ, God imputes the righteousness of Christ to the believer because that is what Christ made us by his obedience unto the death of the cross.

If a sinner boasts of his faith, then he does not have true faith. Even in the way the sinner obtains faith boasting is excluded because faith is the gift of God by his free and sovereign grace.

Ephesians 2: 8: For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: 9: Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10: For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Faith in Christ is one of those good works that God foreordained which God himself brings all his justified people to walk in. So faith excludes boasting because faith is opposite to works. By faith we believe on Christ, trusting that God has justified us in Christ, apart from our works and apart from any goodness in us.

Acts 13:39: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Romans 10:10: For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Faith excludes boasting because it is accompanied with repentance from looking to self and repentance from our dead works. When God gives faith to a sinner, we cry as did the apostle Paul,

Galatians 6:14: God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

Philippians 3:3: For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh

This is faith's conclusion, "*Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.*" All our boasting is in Christ Jesus, the Lord our Righteousness.

Now, be careful to note, Paul has not changed the context. This is the context of Romans 3 and 4—even of all of Romans, even all of scripture. I want you to see that justification, righteousness through faith in Christ, without the deeds of the law is the context here; it has not changed.

THE JUSTIFICATION OF JEW AND GENTILE

Romans 3: 29: *Is he* the God of the Jews only? *is he* not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: 30: Seeing *it is* one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

The circumcision referred to here are God's elect among the Jews. The uncircumcision are God's elect among the Gentiles. Both are justified by one God, one way, that is through faith in Christ. So, through faith, the justification of God's elect Gentiles, as well as God's elect Jews, is accomplished.

But why does the Spirit of God move Paul to include the fact that God is the God of the Gentiles? This is so wise! It is because God never even gave the Gentiles the law. How then is the justification of the Gentile accomplished if they do not even have the law? It is by one God, one way, "*Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.*"

The Spirit of God moved Paul to make the same argument which the Spirit moved the apostle Peter to make. Remember, when the Jews tried to bring Gentile believers back under the law? This is such a clear and dogmatic statement.

Acts 15: 5: But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Moses. 6: And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter. 7: And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men *and* brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. 8: And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as *he did* unto us; 9: And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. 10: Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? 11: But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

God sent Peter to preach to some of God's elect Gentiles. They heard the gospel of Christ. Therein, God revealed the righteousness of Christ to them, purifying their hearts through faith. So, Peter declares that his fellow Jews were tempting God by putting a yoke upon these Gentiles which neither they nor their fathers ever could establish by their works. He declared that he and his fellow Jews would be saved, even as those Gentiles. What a statement! Peter did not say that those Gentiles shall be saved even as we Jews. That would have been saying that the Gentiles would need to be brought under the law. But Peter declared the gospel that he and his fellow Jews would be saved even as those Gentiles who never even had the law of God. By that statement he declared that those Jews would have to be made to repent from their so-called righteousness by the law and rest entirely in Christ alone. As Paul declared in our text, "*it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision [the Jew] by faith, and the uncircumcision [the Gentile] through faith.*" Whether Jew or Gentiles, it is God who justifies us. And God does it one way, through faith in Christ, apart from our observance of the law. We will see where Paul goes with this when we get to Romans 4: 9-16.

So through faith in Christ, God not only excludes all boasting in the sinner he saves, but also through faith in Christ, God justifies the Gentile who did not ever have the law of God, showing his elect Jews that they shall be saved the same way, that is, through faith in Christ, apart from the works of the law.

Again, be sure to note, that the context does not change when we come to this next point.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE LAW

Romans 3: 31: Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

It is only through faith in Christ that sinners establish the law.

All of us have heard preachers totally change the context when they get to this point. Totally out of context, they use this verse to do what those Jews did to the Gentile believers. They tempt God by putting the believer back under the yoke of the law which no Jew was ever able to establish by his works. But this verse declares the same point as the two prior points. It declares what God does for the sinner through faith in Christ. Here is the establishing of the law.

The apostle Paul faced the same charge of antinomianism that we face. On one occasion, will-worshippers laid hold of the apostle Paul,

Acts 21: 28: Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all *men* every where against the people, and the law, and this place.

Knowing the self-righteous would object that he was preaching against the law, Paul answers their objection. Knowing those who are yet going about to establish their own righteousness, who have not submitted themselves unto Christ, the Righteousness of God, would call him antinomian, Paul answers the objection by saying, "*Do we then make void the law through faith?*" He could have added, "as we be slanderously charged." He says, "*God forbid: yea, through faith in Christ who established the law for us, we establish the law.*"

What is even more amazing than the fact men twist Paul's words is that they almost always support their falsehood by twisting Christ's words in Matthew 5. Christ said,

Matthew 5: 17: Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18: For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Men say, "See, Christ did not destroy the law. Believers are still obligated to establish it." Well, if that is what Christ meant then notice Christ said, "*I did not come to destroy the law AND the prophets.*" Therefore, if believers are bound to fulfill the law then we are also bound to fulfill the prophets, too! But that is absurd!

The establishing of the law is the fulfilling of the law perfectly in every jot and tittle. That is what it is to be justified, righteous. Paul declared throughout Romans 1-3, that no sinner can establish the law by our obedience. He declared the righteousness of God—the perfect establishing of the law, the fulfilling of the law—is manifest, without our deeds to the law, by the faith of Christ himself. And that righteousness—that perfect establishing of the law—is unto and upon all that believe on Christ!

If a man has ears to hear, Christ declares that the Pharisee's who teach sinners that they can establish the law by their works, are themselves breaking the law and teaching others to do the same.

Matthew 5: 19: Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven:...20: For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

But it is Christ who fulfills the word he spoke in the second half of verse 19. He said,

Matthew 5: 19...but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Christ fulfilled the law and Christ is teaching his people that the way we establish the law is through faith in him. And Christ is he who shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Now, back to Romans 3, if we review the context of Romans 3 one more time we see that it is impossible to conclude that after going to such great lengths to show us that we all, Jew and Gentile, are depraved sinners, that Paul then told us we still must establish the law by our works.

After declaring that there is none righteous, no not one and that the law was given to declare all the world guilty and shut our mouths, it is absurd to imagine Paul then declares the believer must establish the law by his doing.

After declaring that Christ, by his faith, established the righteousness of the law, apart from our law-keeping, how absurd would it be for Paul then to say that we still must establish the law ourselves?

After saying clearly that believers are justified freely by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, who redeemed us from the curse of the law by being made a curse for us, why would anyone imagine Paul then brings us back under the law and points us to ourselves to establish it.?

After declaring that God set Christ forth a propitiation through faith in his blood, that God set Christ forth to declare his righteousness for the remission of the sins of old testament believers, that God set Christ forth to declare that God is just and the Justifier of him that believeth in the Lord Jesus, that boasting is excluded only by faith in Christ, that Jews are justified the same way as the Gentiles who never had the law, and that, by God, through faith in Christ, what foolishness to even hint that Paul means we are yet obligated to establish the law ourselves!

To be justified by Christ through faith means through faith we establish the whole law of God—not by our doing but by Christ's.

Paul would have destroyed everything he was teaching if he suddenly changed the context and brought believers back under the yoke of the law. Paul is saying, "*Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; through faith in Christ, who established the law for us, we establish the law.*"

As I have showed you before, Paul backs up this truth using Abraham who lived 430 years before the law was given. Be sure to get that! Abraham lived 430 years before the law of God was given at Mt. Sinai. Yet, look what Abraham found,

Romans 4: 1: What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? 2: For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God. 3: For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

God imputed righteousness to Abraham, declaring that Abraham had perfectly established the law, 430 years before the law was given. How did he do that? Through faith in Christ who established it for Abraham and for all his people. Oh, sinner, hear this good news and believe on Christ.

Romans 4: 23: Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; 24: But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; 25: Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

Believer, for you who rest in Christ our Righteousness alone, here is the great comfort we have,

Romans 5: 1: Therefore, being justified, by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Amen!