

October 13/14, 2012

## **The Gospel Story: Justified By Faith**

*A Study of Romans*

Romans 3:21-31

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### **Opening Discussion**

1. In your opinion, what is the culture's "doctrine" of sin?
2. Does the culture's approach to sin create happiness or despair? Why?
3. Can you share a time when discovering a problem was actually good news to you because it meant you could identify a solution? How is the Gospel Story like that?

### **Bible Study**

1. Review the conclusion of Romans 1:18-3:20. What words might you use to describe the picture Paul has painted in those verses? Summarize the situation in one sentence.
2. Read Romans 3:21-26. Many commentators would say this paragraph in Romans is the most significant paragraph in the entire Bible. See if you can define the following terms:
  - a. Righteousness of God
  - b. Faith
  - c. Belief
  - d. Justified
  - e. Gift/grace
  - f. Redemption
  - g. Propitiation
3. What is the solution to the problem of sin according to this text? How is that solution obtained? To whom is it available? What is the difference between just being pardoned and being justified? Why does this matter?

4. How does the Gospel Story as described by Paul here in Romans allow God to be both just and the justifier (3:26)? Could God just forgive sinners without the debt of sin being paid? Why or why not according to this text?
5. Can you summarize this paragraph in a few sentences?
6. Read Romans 3:27-31. If the preceding paragraph is true, is there any basis for spiritual boasting? How might we explain “spiritual arrogance”? Who is actually “self-righteous”, the Christian or the non-Christian? Why?

## **Application**

1. The essence of the Gospel story is simple but also can be very hard (not complicated). What is it that prevents people from receiving the gift God freely offers? What would you identify as the number one barrier to people receiving God’s gift of salvation?
2. If you personally have not received this gift from God, what would prevent you from doing so now? Why would you wait? What is it that is preventing you from this decision?
3. Take some time to share with one another your own story of coming to belief in Jesus and how that has changed your life.