

Expositional Outline of Romans 3:19-4:25

Main Idea: Justification is by faith in Christ, not by keeping the Law.

I. The Law does not justify, but declares the sinfulness of all by bringing about knowledge of sin (3:19-20).

- A. The law declares the universality of sin (3:19).
- B. The law justifies no one (3:20a).
- C. The law reveals the universality of sin by giving knowledge of sin (3:20b).

II. God justifies humanity through faith in Christ, not the keeping the Law (3:21-26).

- A. The righteousness of God by which God justifies (3:21-23)
 - 1. This way of justification is not a new way (3:21).
 - 2. This way of justification is universally valid because it addresses a universal problem (3:22-23).
- B. The righteousness of God which justifies comes through Jesus Christ (3:24-26).
 - 1. This way of justification is based on God's grace and is revealed in Jesus Christ (3:24a).
 - 2. This way of justification is the result of Christ's work as redeemer: He paid the debt of eternal punishment we owed (3:24b).
 - 3. This way of justification is the result of Christ's work as propitiation: satisfied the wrath of God by taking the penalty on himself (3:25).
 - 4. This way of justification is tied up in Christ because he did the work necessary to accomplish it without neglecting God's righteousness (3:26).

III. God justifies both Jews and Gentiles by faith (3:27-31).

- A. This way of justification leaves no reason for anyone to boast (3:27).
- B. This way of justification is by faith alone; one cannot mix works and faith (3:28).
- C. This way of justification is universal; there is only one way of justification for both Jew and Gentile (3:29-30).

IV. Father Abraham is a Scriptural example of one who was justified by faith (4:1-25).

- A. Abraham was justified by faith, not by works (4:1-8).
 - 1. Abraham has no reason to boast because the Scriptures are clear (Gen. 15:6) that he was justified by faith, not works (4:1-3).
 - 2. David confirms this teaching in Psa. 32:1-2 (4:4-8).
- B. The members of Abraham's true family are not those who have Abraham's circumcision (4:9-15).
 - 1. Abraham was justified by faith before he was circumcised (4:9-10).
 - 2. Abraham is the father of those who are justified by faith whether they are circumcised or not (4:11-12).
 - 3. Abraham received the promise through the righteousness of faith and his promise is to those who have faith, not to those who keep the law (4:13-16).
- C. Abraham's true descendants are those who have the faith of Abraham (4:17-25).
 - 1. Abraham's faith gave God glory by believing God would do the impossible, even raising the dead (4:17-22).
 - 2. Those who believe like Abraham will be justified like Abraham (4:23-25).

Conclusion: The faith that justifies is the faith that gives glory to God by trusting in God to keep his promises, not the faith that gives glory to us by trusting in our own ability to keep the law. We must give God glory by being confident (as our father Abraham was) that God can and will keep his promises to us.